

Bell and Wing



Frederick Fanning Ayer



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BELL AND WING

BY

FREDERICK FANNING AYER

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
GAGE D'AMOUR	I
A BIRD IN A BONNET	6
LILAC	11
WYTOPITLOCK	13
TO SUCH A WIFE	15
ONE MAN	19
TRICKLY LE BON POT	28
PYRRHA	30
SUMMER DAYS	42
GLOXINIA	45
NO MAN'S FRIEND	49
SUFFICIT	54
MAN AND BIRD	63
IN THE NATURE OF THINGS	67
PEARL	78
KNOW THYSELF	83
PETER ROUBLEMINT	85
NOW AND THEN	90
GOLGOTHA	93
EDWARD FARNUM SOUTHWICK	110
THE APPIAN WAY	115
IN CÆLIS	118
SONG	122
LOVER TO PRIEST	124
SUPERNITY	126
EGOHOOD	132
HERE 'S LUCK	143
SING, GENTLE BIRD	146
"SUCCESS" AT A BRUSH	150
QUECHEE RIVER	153

	PAGE
LORD LAVISH	158
VILLAGE FOOL	163
BEN TOTAL	179
COME, COME AWAY	185
MY XENIUM	191
ON THE RHINE	196
NONCONFORMIST	203
PEBBLES	211
DOCTOR AND PATIENT	216
BOY SONG	228
ONE AFTERNOON	231
AGNES	238
JOCKEY-DAY	241
THE MAN OF IT	244
VIEWFULLY	248
OOTRUM AND CORNCOCKLE	258
KNOW THY TASK	262
THE MAN MILITANT	265
A BACHELOR	290
IN THE OVERWORLD	294
A JAPANESE WAR CLAIM	297
IMPROMPTU	301
DEVERSORIUM VIATORIS HIEROSOLYMAM PROFICISCENTIS	306
HER DUKE	308
HALO SKIMP	315
OLD DARBY	320
LOVE	335
LITTLE SILVER	337
TWINS	342
HELL	346
SHELDRAKE ELEGANCE	350
HIS WORST	355
MY FRIENDS	364
MAN AND BOOK	371
WILY SMILEY	376
AMONG RUINS	383
FOR EXAMPLE	390
DEAD	394
KNOW THY PHYLLIS	403
ESTO PERPETUA	406

Contents

v

	PAGE
A ROBBER	410
BOUNTIFUL CANNY'S GRANDDAUGHTER FROM DULL MOOR	417
MABEL MAPLETON	430
AFRAID OF ME?	435
ENDLESSNESS	439
IN A MIRROR	443
IN A DREAM	447
PAPER DOLLS	452
PINK APPLE POINT	456
VALERIE FAY	465
NO DEATH	467
CRAFT	473
ALWAYS ROSALIE	479
AT SEA	482
THE STORY OF ZEMEPHETH TALLITH	485
ONE GREAT MAN	488
HEREAFTER	492
IN PRESTON	503
ROSY WEIGELIA	507
LIFE IN THE WORLD	512
EUNICE	522
IN A BELL-TOWER	526
CONFIDENTIALLY	542
ADELYN, OR HOW TO WIN HER	545
MOON FIELDS, OR MAN THE GOD	556
NOT YOUR DOG!	658
BROTHERS	660
MAN OR SPIDER?	663
KNOW THY HORSE	669
LEO AND ELFINELLA	674
THINKING OF EUNICE	686
TO A STREET MINSTREL	694
DON DUN	698
POLLY MAN AND POLLY GIRL	702
CAMPO SANTO	707
IN AN INN	711
ATHANASIA	716
PLUCK-LUCK	719
BRILLA	732
BY LOVE.	737

	PAGE
ALIOTH	745
MIDFIELD THOUGHTS	748
GUNFLINT	752
THINKING OF PRESTON	756
EUTHANASIA	761
IMPERIALISM	768
KNOW THY CHICK	777
RIVALS	783
PRIEST AND SEQUELA	786
GREATNESS	795
EUNICE AND I	797
THOU SHALT NOT KILL	801
LOST AND FOUND	805
SPIRIT	807
WAITING	812
A SKY WORD	817
WORSHIP <i>versus</i> Love	822
SPIRIT BEAUTY	827
CLASPING THE ROSES	832
SEMPER SUPRA	836
DOLLAR-FOOT FARM	840
INCOGNITO	846
CLAUDIA	849
THE GENERAL	861
RAISON D'ÊTRE	866
A SONG IN A THISTLE	870
THE HEEL OF THE HUNT	876
PRUNELLA'S PRIEST	881
ONE NOBLEMAN	917
RUN-AMUCK MACK	920
'ROUND A CORNER	924
TWO KINDS OF LOVE	928
ANTIPODES	936
CASSANDRA SOUTHWICK	944
THE QUESTION	950
ROSALIE	955
A MONK IN MONOTONE	958
THE SHARK AND THE LARK	961
COR CORDIUM	979
AMONG THE MOONBEAMS	982

Contents

vii

	PAGE
AT A WINDOW	986
JEALOUS	990
AT THE ALTAR	993
SWORD AND PEN	997
DE AMICITIA	1001
KINGS AND QUEENS	1005
PHILOSOPHER AND PRIEST	1009
KNOW THY MATE	1015
BLOODHOUNDS OF THE CZAR	1019
DEATH	1030
NOT SO QUICK	1035
AFTER DEATH	1040
EAGLE SONG	1047
A SHRIVING PEN	1049
ELSEWHERE	1054
BREAD ON THE WATERS	1057
MORE AND HIGHER	1072
NOT A WORD	1077
TRAGEDY	1082
CHARLOTTE	1087
À BRAS OUVERTS	1090
THE SYLPH SELF	1091
GAMBLERS	1094
MY WREN	1098
ELLA AND STELLA	1101
FOR LOVE	1105
UNDER SNOW	1109
PICKTHANK AND PRUDENCE	1111
NOT YET	1118
SUNRISE REVERIE	1122
VIRTUTE, NON ASTUTIA	1129
ELBOWS	1136
FEARFULNESS	1140
A FRIEND	1146
LONGINGS OF AN ACOLYTE	1153
THE NIGHT OF THE BIG WIND	1167
MY ROSE	1171
FOR A SIGN	1175
THE STARS	1182
ELMBANK	1186

	PAGE
PEACHAM PASTURE	1196
EWIGZEITGEIST	1203
THE INDICTMENT	1210
BATTLE	1219
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN	1222
TWO NOTES OF A THRUSH	1227
TO MY FOREFATHERS	1230
SAVIGNY AND SELTZERELLA	1234
PRIESTLINESS	1239
NOT ALL IS GOLD	1245
BY MOONRISE	1248
HEAVEN	1256

BELL AND WING

BELL AND WING

GAGE D' AMOUR

HERE is only one speckled flower
Out of my garden,
Grew sweetness there and power
Meant to reguerdon
Such complemental care,
Shows sun-wash, lashing air,
Shows a way of its own
Which itself has grown,
And now is blue and white
And a beautiful sight.

I tuck the flower inside
My breast, as you see,
Where such memories hide
As will live with me—
Two memories, and both such
As never time could touch
In any eternity
To unravel the flower
Or strip it of power,
Or crowd its light
Out of my sight,

Gage d'Amour

Such blue and such white!

My garden? Once it was theirs,
These my two eternal friends
Death captured,—death spares
The spot where their lilac bends,
For there were they too in spring;
This was their oriole,
Once they heard him sing
Such overflow of soul
As made the meadows ring
As if they too had soul to sing.

Here is their pebble-path;
They took it in their day
For the twist it hath
And cut-diamond-play
In among these showers
Of pelican flowers
Where I walk, while I see too
This flower is white, that is blue,
But no flower leaps so free
Or full of ripe supremacy
As this blue flower they left to me.

In it is power to fight
Wind or cuff of sleet
To capture jacaranda light,
Turn the rye-grass sweet
As sweetness, stand straight,
Put a cheek to any fate
To execute any feat,
Make this effort-life complete.

Shall I follow my two friends on
Their way they have gone,
Seek to be as they
In their former day
And their world away,
Or make my soul distinct
As the pheasant's-eye is pinked,
Wears its own pate,
Goes its own gait
To be the one way typed and great?
For though the same sun now shines out,
Each man nurses his own doubt,
As each cloud wears its unique pout.

Yonder is each garden-chair
Where they would sit at noon
To say: "Life is worth a care;
Does not midnight make the moon?"
There was I, the child,
There they cooed and smiled
To see me puzzle to know
And mimic to grow,
So would say: "Love to our child!
See that you learn to glee
As the reed-bird flashes wild
From his eucalyptus tree
Because he is himself and free!"

So I took their word,
Not their way they went;
I followed what I heard,
My own ballad-bent,
My own truth I had,

Gage d'Amour

Never priest nor myriad
To govern me or suggest,
So I enforced my best
Of my whole self as I was
For love of it and because
I got the flower from them,
This blue lily on a stem.

With me always to last
Is the thing I love,
The thought of them that are past,
Their path to beyond and above
Anything about I see,
Anything I know or think,
For soul is one eternity,
And so I love this brink
Of life I look from, since I know
They looked and loved the same way so.

Death is like being born;
Now that I unravel light
I see life is only night,
I see death is only dawn.
So I keep gladness in hand,
I foot my garden through
Where once they took their stand,
Took this flower, white and blue,
To drop to me, the which I keep
To carry—there 's the soul I reap.

Yet are they gone, so I am sad,
While next around me now
Each thrasher in his heart is glad
Of blossom in his apple-bough,

And so he sings to sing,
Never minds the gain at hand,
Mate or any happy land,
But just his love of carolling
Is uppermost, so he scarce knows
Any harsh wind how it blows,
While I am up to follow, try
If I may catch his song and eye
Only to find how slow
My heart is, my note how low,
For here are their tripod and garden chair,
Their little pebble thoroughfare,
And, oh, to think they are no more there!

A BIRD IN A BONNET

I

CAUGHT at last—my bird, too!
Out of your meadow-lush once you came
That white morning in a frock of blue
To match your eye-fire against a game
Of sun-shots from an early dew,
I thought it and said it then,
There was danger if you played with men.

II

Somewhat of men I know;
You too had learned to be mostways shy,
Seeing how thy take to killing so
And you not ready that day to die,
Flute at your last adagio,
Dab those ribbon-wings with rust,
Pay life's price, one little puff of dust.

III

All the while you knew
Men are dangerous, mark them as a class,
Make light of that which is fine or new,
Would not let a starlit starling pass

A Bird in a Bonnet

7

If they could split the small heart through—
Not so very far removed
From their puma-cousin, as is proved.

IV

Came there one gentle hand
Of my Rosalie, fingers through the grass,
Plucked you, tucked you in her bonnet-band
—Who could let such gold-eyed purple pass?—
So a whole world might understand,
Whether you dropped or on you went,
How Beauty is its own monument.

V

In an oxlip primrose
Was the fine last note I caught from you
When your early new morning hymn rose
Up through one necklace of dancing dew
Which sprinkled sparks on the dim close
Till color and song and fire
Swept my soul up to all vast desire.

VI

How you sang, lips torn apart
As if the throat and soul of you would go
To take with them such heaven-heavied heart,
Leave a few stripes and sun-spots below
Which men might finger, see to chart—
The best of you counted not much,
Nothing was there they could taste or touch!

VII

What lips—still open wide,
Right where your song stopped when you were slain,
As if you thought, just before you died,
You could catch the sweet note once again!
Throats are narrow, but soul is wide,
So here is the one strange thing,
That you may flash no more nor leap nor sing.

VIII

Your song, too, has that died out
More than the soul which made it has,
For here we have it again, past doubt,
And autumn not past Michaelmas—
Hark to what wild orchestral shout,
Right where my true Rosalie
Has hung her hat in an almond tree,

IX

Comes from a dozen throats
Perched just above you, my bonnet-queen,
To drop you a shower of such joy-bell notes
As you taught them once behind a screen
Of holly where Christmas dotes!
How they call to you and shout
For wonder that you only gape about!

X

So is your song still there
Like your yellow-spotted frock of blue,
All that once was of you that was fair,
So men may come a little more like you

They thought to kill—death would not share
 With you and your soul-sonnet,
 My mistress of a summer bonnet!

XI

Always, too, in air,
 Whether on wing or hat or branches,
 Like an intermediary there
 'Twixt sky and earth to take the chances
 So your sweet bosom broke forth fair,
 One sun-eyed leap, your song of mirth,
 Like you were calling me up from earth,

XII

As ever high above men,
 What with such song-burst out of color,
 I, too, look up again and again,
 This anchored world looks dull and duller
 Matched with your moon-meridian,
 While you sweep down to us, God knows,
 Only to perch where some honey-petal blows,

XIII

So you lighted at last
 With Rosalie, in her new bonnet,
 Like a sailor in the mizzenmast,
 One claw of zinfandel coiled upon it,
 Scarlet ipomœa made fast,
 And she, my Rosalie there,
 The all-blown rose in your yard-arm square!

A Bird in a Bonnet

XIV

Men die to turn to poor
Pale nothing of a wasted face,
While you there, you have a foothold sure,
Keep your purple jacket and your place
Just as a spirit would, secure
Above my lady's bonnet
To fly the world through safe upon it.

XV

Over and above your trees,
Or out of a cloud to slip away
Against all heaven as if you would please
Its blue cold breast with your new lay
Or rouse it by one burst of glees,
I knew you for bell and wing,
Wild bugle-throated Beauty of a thing!

LILAC

CONSCIENCE hit him: It was wrong
 To task her
To be weak instead of strong;
 To ask her
To look lightly on the human life—
 Death or strife;

Pricked and stung him: It was weak
 To love her
As the flashing of a week
 Above her,
Just to glut one fancy for an hour
 In her power;

Clinched and cowed him: It was low
 In the breast
To make her common, hollow
 As the rest;
To lock her joy in empty sorrow
 To-morrow.

Then it stabbed: She was all
 As a child,
As quick to trip and fall
 If beguiled;
Easily tricked and fowled as a lark
 After dark.

Lilac

So he held her in the power
Of his skill;
Could have crushed her in an hour
To his will
To drop her to your hungry street,
Slime and sleet.

Has he killed because the art
Was his best?
Did he spill the linnet's heart
For a jest
To clip its narrow wing where it began,
Noble man?

Could he never learn how this
Was the first
Tiger's impulse which was his
At his worst,
Some hell's instinct hellishly recast
From the Past?

She has pinned a lilac spray
To his coat,
The flower which slept that day
At her throat,
So caught the one word she could not say
On its way,

Just a word: Be my true man,
Strong as Fate!
Take what good of me you can,
Small or great;
Take the lilac of me, 't is the best—
Leave the rest.

WYTOPITLOCK

COCK-ROBIN hill is a place I knew
When I was boy and all day long
I kept an ear to the robin's song,
Kept an eye to where he flew
In the sun he stopped,
In the fog he chopped.

By the hill-side up the flowers were red,
Or under foot again they were white,
As if the month of June had been bled
And was dying like a wounded knight!
What an hour it was
In the moss and haws!

I took my way up the slope, I took
My way by my mountain-laurel brook
To reach one spot of pinnacle where
Chorus drifted in the air
Like the throat of a bird
When his heart is heard.

Such a fine song as I never knew
Was dancing now with the dancing wind,
While I was making to get to it too
Before such triumphant glee could be thinned
By the time I took
To listen and look.

Wytopotlock

Never the song of thrush was such
As this was, lilted and tilted so
I could not stop, yet I feared to go
Lest I should lose, by a step too much,
One call or one note
Of the trumpet-throat.

On I manœuvred on higher up,
Pulled at club-moss or wild apple-cup,
Made my way straight too to where I thought
My bird was and such music was wrought
As never was heard
Out of lip or bird.

Now was I come to the very top,
Now was my song, too, come to a stop
And I listened—there was windless hush,
When, snug in one thick calico-bush,
Tucked away in back
By her trick of knack

Was Eunice, my Eunice, her way she knew
To summon me and to time me too
By her song—her song of the April wren
Which I hear now as I heard it then,
Her song which I hear
After many a year.

TO SUCH A WIFE

OH, you think you made a mistake
Just that day you married him
For love and his own sweet sake,
Which now you think was a girleen whim—
You were too young to know of men,
Wisdom was beyond your ken
Or your needing then.

Life took its chatty way along,
You found no fault in the main,
Each day captured its silver song
Of tree-field finch, canary grain,
While you went gathering, day on day,
The sweets of life your young way,
Nor a plaint to say.

He was high kindness, your life-mate was,
One strong good man, kept his heart
For you and his human cause,
Fought his way by the mastermost art
Of doing his all for the world and you,
Was superhumanly true,
And you knew it too.

To Such a Wife

Satellites coiling about a sun
His little ones were, three in all,
Made in his image, each one—
It may be there 's one day you recall
You clung to the youngest to let him know
You never could let him go,
 He looked the father so.

Or such an evening as Heaven looks down
I saw you both once, arm in arm,
Far over beyond our town
To watch the stars in their field of charm—
That evening it was I heard you say
They pointed a higher way,
 A finer day;

All which goes for pure nothing now
You have discovered the truth
That, look at it anyhow,
One may not tie to these whims of youth,
So soon, for fact, they will pass away
When womanhood has its day,
 Wisdom her way.

Your love was a thing, you think, to die,
Child-play, something premature,
Little mightier than your sigh,
Or you thought you loved, yet you were not sure,
While now you fancy you have the truth,
That love will outgrow its youth
 And itself, forsooth!

"So," said you, "if I do not love
 My life-mate, one proper thing
 And likewise easy enough
 Is to leave him—no whimpering
 Nor back thought," so you set your mind
 One day cold and hard inclined
 To drop him behind.

But what was to pay, my sweet wise wife,
 Or what was to learn, by chance,
 Soon as you thought of his life,
 His love and the solemn circumstance
 Of leaving him alone in his place,
 Never more to share your grace,
 To hold your face?

What now was to think or to do,
 Of noble best purpose what,
 When all was ready for you
 To leave him so, yet your heart would not?
 What could have held you back by the hour
 But love of a wider dower,
 Deeper power?

Not love as once the old love was
 When you were younger, perhaps,
 Or you loved without a cause,
 For love has a thousand tricks and traps,
 Catches you, lets you go again,
 Knows how power comes of pain,
 And the meaning is plain:

To Such a Wife

You shall not escape from what is best,
And noblest is best each day;
So are you put to the test
To see if your noblest shall have its way,
The mighty best of you—there 's the thing
Makes for superhumaning,
 There 's the love I sing!

Is he not kind and foremost-true,
This mate of yours, and his life
Wholly highly given to you
By heart and soul in his street of strife,
His best he could think or do
To tower to, to hope for too,
 And all for you?

There 's the high Beauty of your man,
While who is there lives and breathes
Loves not Beauty more than
Those sweets for which he fingers and teethes,
Loves not all Beauty first, all in spite
Of whim or any gain or might,
 By rule of right?

So I say, 'though you reckon not what,
So I tell how, in spite of you,
Whether you know it or not,
You love your man who is kind and true!

ONE MAN

I

HOG-UGLY was this man I knew once,
Before I knew him for what he was,
His life one kind of silent pause—
Hobbled like a bunch of stunts;
“Snaffled” the town-boys named him,
So much hard times had tamed him—
Nose like a toad-horn, so little of him
To look at was worth the seeing,
Such a loose-cut curious being
The world seemed all above him,
None to follow, none to love him,
Which one would certainly say
Of his puff-muffin look and walrus-way.

II

None seemed to know of him who he was—
Always his way by some lonesome street
He would take, yet for never cause
One could guess—always complete
Was the mystery was hung about him
As men would shuffle to dodge and doubt him.

One Man

III

One thing odd about him was this,
More than all others: close to his heels
A dog or two would follow to kiss
His footsteps as if they were seals
Of fortune—so one day I said:
More is this man than heels and head,
Somewhat is of him which hopes and feels;
I 'll follow his compass of toes,
Watch how he sneaks to where he goes,
Know what he does, which nobody knows.

IV

Over beyond the town you cross
A meadow, then a ditch,
Into a field of pauper-haws
To where the country takes a pitch
Through one thicket of Titan-trees,
One forest-edge by a strip of river
Which never moved a lip to quiver
As far through the trees one could see
Keen sunlight strike like an arrow,
Each leaf dance the dance of a bee,
Then droop to flutter like a sparrow
Struck by the sting of any arrow.

V

Into the forest my man stalks,
His two dogs there at his heels—
I watch him as on he walks,
I wonder what he thinks and feels,

He alone in the world for not
 A neighbor to pass him a thought,
 To say him: "This is an ugly day,
 But you take heart, never you mind,
 God is more than a dish of clay,
 Soul is king and high-inclined
 And you shall come to your own one day."
 On he totters from tree to tree,
 Each tree a friend to look him steady,
 Pass a hand to him strong and ready
 And full of promise of more to be.

VI

On he totters, noon is on,
 His world he has left behind him,
 An ugly thought, may be, is gone,
 Nothing of the town to mind him
 He 's excommunicate, cut off
 From what the world thinks world enough
 To glut a man, fill his soul,
 As if spirit has any whole,
 Makes any ending, mounts any goal!

VII

His was such hungry hunted look—
 Could it be his way he took
 To live aside, never mingle
 With the cheap jump and jingle
 Of the world, or had the world left him
 Straightway because nature bereft him

One Man

Of iris and jessamy-vine
 So he should pink and orange shine,
 Who should say? Albeit I followed
 Where forest folded in and swallowed
 A day like a yellow grape,
 Yet never crimsoned at the rape.

VIII

Of a sudden I saw he stopped—
 Out before him his look was dreary,
 His way underneath him weary.
 Now the underbrush had mopped
 His path up—down there he sat
 In one little angle-plat
 For gazing among his trees
 To wish he might be one of these
 High-handed, pearl-banded trees
 To poke his head up skyward,
 Never know mock or byword,
 Handsome in the lock and limb,
 Fingers to reach for Seraphim
 Of light and space and Beauty
 Above trough-life, belly-booty—
 Just to be as one of these
 Handsome-handed music-trees
 Full of little lofty glees
 To whisper secrets to the breeze,
 To never let the sumbeams pass,
 To sprinkle pictures in the grass—
 Just to be the like of them
 From the under-dike of them
 To each high-pointing spike of them!

IX

Down he sat, now noon was high—

 This much of him always was known,
Never yet was he alone,

 For there at his elbow by
His two dogs were in touch with him—

 How they leaped and bounded
As if their hearts were hounded

 By strong love to make much of him,
Now at his shoulder and neck,

 Now at his lip and cheek,
Nothing to hold them in check

 —Oh if their tongues could speak!—
Over his lap by a leap,

 Over his head at a dart,
Into his lap in a heap

 Of wonderful wild true heart
To look at him such a look,

 To say to him such a soul
As stars in my meadow-brook,
 Sweet in my clover-bowl!

X

Just the one bread-loaf, enough for two,

 Never enough for three was there,
Yet he the same way generous-true,

 So much heart in him to spare,
Eager to give his dogs his share,

 Yet for want of warmth grew pale
As noon does if sunbeams fail,

 So took to picking new wild cherry,
Any kind of shrub or berry

To hold him together awhile—
Who knows when any Heaven may smile?

XI

Never he got sight of me,
I behind this or another tree
Where I could keep view of him to see
The nobleman in him, superlative heart,
His fearlessness, his little thinking
Of himself, his never shrinking
From what is soul-most great,
Bread for his dogs and he could wait,
As too how plain to be seen
Their love of him, which he well knew
Would wait and starve and die for him too
If need was and they only knew—
The great man, yet so little of him
Your world thinks worth sticking to,
Cuticle, toe-peak, ormolu,
There was none to think to love him
As there he turned to his gentle trees
To get the whisper of one of these,
One voice of God in such lonely breeze.

XII

Now was I softly behind him,
Time was come to unblind him,
To let him know I was there
With my thought of him and my care
In the forest-oak air.
Tapped I gently at his shoulder,
Grew such sudden handful bolder

That when he turned I offered him my hand
He took like he were subject to command,
As there, each looking to each, we stood
In touch in the willow and mushroom wood,
I to look to him to see
Such high-thoughted sublimity
Of soul, of heartfulness in his eyes
Beyond what is worldly-wisdom-wise
As never was seen before,
I venture, while by all the more
I looked him through and through,
His was the kindest look and true,
Blue eyes as deepest heaven is blue.

XIII

Hand in hand—and now he could see
Honestness and the friend in me
To trust to, I was outspoken,
One wide way to his heart was broken
As I now to tell him began:
“For the life of me I have been looking
Once in the world to find a man,
Not here where the king-lark is juking,
Where tree-swallows take to their nest,
But over in yonder thickened town
Where man against man, king or clown,
Plays mastiff to smash his brother down,
Never to do his coronal best—
Yet here among your pulpit-trees
Where you hang to the leaves of glees
By another soul, by a nobler plan,
I followed and I found my man.
I know not who you may be,

One Man

Only I know what you are,
 Part of one true eternity
 Out of the world, like a single star,
 To throw your light, be you never so far,
 So drew me to you—never word
 You uttered and I ever heard—
 Only where the philomel stirred
 To wash his wings in sun,
 Where ground-robin and arbutus run
 Was your king-spot, your one way
 You left the world behind each day—
 Yet has the world such need of you,
 One man who shall dare to do
 His true-most for never fear
 Of what may come to him now and here—
 To dare to speak forth and to do
 So all men may see and follow you!"

XIV

Straightway there in the forest
 He built me a bower,
 Thought and fingers of a florist
 To gather each perfect forest flower,
 Dew-bells for diamond-eyes,
 Pink pyrethrum, or any red
 Woodrose knotted in edelweiss
 And laurel to circle my head
 For love of me, such love of me
 He scarce could make enough of me
 As on he went building his bower
 Of every vine and salmon flower
 There at his feet to capture,
 I all love of him and such rapture

As any girl knows when she knows
 A great man loves her—I took his rose,
 As there in his bower of palms
 And perfume of elegant forest charms
 He had me fastened in his arms
 For never thought which was spoken,
 Never once was the silence broken
 Save by one flute-lark overhead
 As we listened and I thought he said:
 Oh, well for the world when such are wed!

XV

A word to you girls by one who knows:
 Judge not a man by his toes and nose,
 By the thing he does, by the way he goes—
 Have him for what he is,
 Greatness in him—you shall not miss
 Nor gather of him more than this,
 Just the sweet spirit which is his.

TRICKLY LE BON POT

A LITTLE copper knuckle on his nose—
 You would think,
To watch him 'twixt the melons and the sink,
See him chuckle, wag his toes,
 Bed his belly in the sun,
 Count the nibbles in a bun,
 You would think

Of the little yellow tassel at his chin—
 You would hold,
To see him eye it, dye it loud as gold,
 Cock an ear up for a fin,
 Tie a ribbon to his shoe,
 Clap a nappy look at you,
 You would hold,

As he took his toppey gait across the street,
 You 'd conclude
If there were any much of him for good,
 'T was a triumph of the feet,
 A shining of the shin
 As a pickerel plays his fin,
 You 'd conclude

From the little choppy giggle at his chin,
 You 'd believe
He surely had a wisdom up his sleeve
 Where the oracles begin,

Just a look to let you think
He was brimming to the brink,
You 'd believe,

If you saw what wonder-way he took to spit,
You would judge
He cherished nothing which he would begrudge,
He so liberal of it,
Such open-hearted show,
"Mere trifle, don't you know,"
You would judge,

To watch him fetch an angle in the sun,
You would say,
To see the monstrous sputterly display,
That an end of thought was run,
That no human truman mood
Could pitch higher than he stood,
You would say

There was gism in him of conspicuous poise,
You would think
Fortune set the compass by his wink,
Cocked an ear up to his noise—
As for aught that he could do
For love of truth or you,
You would think?—

PYRRHA

I

BE perfect as God, my friend!
Don't whimper about it!
Your mighty means to one mighty end,
For how will you doubt it
To look at Beauty? All you see
Is Beauty, or strives to be.
I may not look to a star
But it looks to me from endless far
Eye-flash of prune and cinnabar;
I may not look to a grain
Of snow, corpuscle of rain
But I have it again,
The wheel-about of orange fire
In violet attire!
Or there is the peat-worm's hide,
Lavender on either side,
Stripings of bottle-green,
Rings of Alderney between,
And I thought him nothing or small,
His velvet curtain over him all!
Each sun to his thousand daughters,
Swallows to their zenith-quarters,
Moon-dance in the waltzing waters—
Did you think otherly of soul?
But look to the rounded whole

Of what in spaces I see
Climbing to more sublimity:
Is it not factfully true
The Beauty of it through and through
Leaps there in the soul in you?
Is Beauty not come to stay
Through the change-about of clay?
Worlds to atoms shift their places,
Make new beds and old faces!
On with the shift, and it ceases never,
Yet are the blue and gold there forever!

You shall shift into dust and wind—
Is, then, the Beauty of you,
The what you are, the thing you do,
The masterfulness of truth you pinned,
Made of glass to be whipped in two,
And dust and wind just the soul of you?
Mark how what endures
Is the Beauty of things,
One endless blue far which allures,
Yonder pink light in Leo's wings
To not dwindle and not quit—
Pin your hold to the Beauty in it
To mark how his pink light will last
When Leo is a thing of the past!

II

Lived there once a king
In Lesbos so long ago
'T is most too much to be reckoning
By what I know,

Pyrrha

Such pompous grasping king,
Such a way he had,
His one-man way of governing
By what was bad,
People thought him mad.

A Pelasgian King,
And by what of him I know,
He made no moment of smothering
His heart out so
He could do a thing for just
His greed of gain and lust,
The wolf in him, for he could bite
His way for spite,
Nor mattered wrong or right.

Gorgeous was his court,
Cloth of gold, porphyry piles,
Girls of a tournure cunningly wrought
As their crop of smiles
For his pleasure, each kilt
To the knees was gilt
As they coiled and ogled and sang
Till his castle rang
Half a parasang.

Men in iron stood
Just for their power to undo
Whatever should go against his mood—
How well he knew
How power must wear a charm
To be safe from harm,

While so he hedged him about
By soldier and scout
To bolt the sly world out.

Soon he took to war
For one thing noble to do;
Epirus was what he hungered for,
Thought well he knew
That to crumble and kill
By stroke of skill
Must make things crumble to his will—
So war was declared,
Nor a man to be spared.

How men do blunder,
Think to make their mighty way
By the genius of rape and plunder
And nought to pay,
Theirs just booty and loot,
The tramp of the brute,
As if there went no power to play
At Right, make for best,
Grow the love-burdened breast!

Straight on went his war,
Men were killed like apple-flies
For what he pallored and thirsted for,
One vaster prize
Of more people and land
In his iron hand,
As if to dominate by pinch,
Hold a nation in his clinch
Could make him great an inch!

Pyrrha

Just a year was by;
Epirots and Pelasgians fought
Till all seemed ready to stab and die
Nor take a thought
Of thousands dead and gone
Just to carry on
A king to power so he might say
He had more power than they,
Power to cut and slay.

One day late of June
Came a messenger to speak
For peace—one sweet girl brought the boon,
One Princess meek,
First daughter of the King,
And her following
Six maids of honor—flowers they brought,
Peace they sought
And an end of plot.

Beautiful she was,
Pyrrha, daughter of the King
Of Epirus—there she wore a ring
Of chrysoprase
Which she gave the King
Of Lesbos for truce,
Gave him of all her country to choose
His province to have and to hold
With its trunk of gold.

Answered her the King:
"Your whole country I will take!
You, too, I want for wife—this ring
My pledge I make

To do the thing I say
Or fall by the way!
So take a thought of it to see
If you will humor me
So this thing shall be!

"Be my wife this night,
Tell me your great father's plans,
What are his secrets, how he will fight,
Who are his clans,
And you shall straight be Queen
Of the world between,
Queen of two peoples in place of one,
For as I suck the sun
The thing shall be done.

"Refuse me and you die,
You die the death of a dog;
For who is there born greater than I,
My soul agog
With want, my want of you,
Of your kingdom too,
So who shall deny me my right
Since I have the might,
Have the hand to smite?"

"Slay me, Sire," she said,
Fling me to your dogs to eat!
Rather a thousand times I were dead
Than I live to meet
Such wish as in you crawls,
Play my father false,
Betray my people to your keep
For you to crush and reap—
Rather would I sleep!"

“Away with her” he said;
“Let her be hamshackled fast!
Away to the block, chop off her head
Ere day be past!
Now shall she learn a thing,
Learn a mighty king
Is not to be mocked in his pride,
To be jostled aside
If he seek a bride!”

This king’s only son,
He who was his prided heir,
Stood by to see what was being done,
Saw she was fair
As any flower of France,
Saw now was his chance
For being man to play high and true—
There he loved her too!

The Beauty of her,
All her great spirit and heart,
And how should any man not love her,
Whine about what ’s to come,
Stand foolsome and dumb,
And she there, as this June wind saith,
To draw her champak breath
For a drink of death?

“To the block!” said he;
“There ’s my place, I to find way
To save her—this thing shall not be,
A hand to slay

The violet! To the block
Her chains to unlock,
I there for man to set her free
By the love in me,
By the powers that be!"

Nor sooner said
Than he was up to demand
His right to number her with the dead
By his own hand:
"Give me your axe and mask
Is all I ask,
Your mantle too, I to your task,
I that can strike to kill
To do my father's will!

"Your axe and mask—do you
Lock me in her prison tower!
There you may see how I shall be true,
By all my power,
To hand her soul to God,
Her ribs to the sod!
If I do not as I say,
If I falter by the way,
Then is my head to pay!"

Alone in her tower
Waited she now to be killed;
The style was on the stroke of the hour,
Each wind was stilled,
As if the heaven held breath
To see her put to death,
And she so fair as cloud-lands lie
In an evening sky
Just before they die.

Sooner now than thought,
 Face in mask, axe in hand
As if to strike to kill on the spot,
 Do the King's command,
Comes the Prince, his place
 At the block, his face
In iron, and straight there he stood
 In his headsman's hood
As your headsman would.

Now she kneels to pray,
 Her last bosomful of breath,
Her last thought of a thing to say
 Before her death,
As there she lays her head
 To count with the dead,
Nor flinch nor murmur manifest—
 She is put to the test
And has done her best.

Quick his mask is off!
 A King's son, a Prince stands now
At her side to tell the meaning of
 Such his gentle bow
And kind touch and mild eye
 And his April sigh,
To tell her his love, how his heart
 Took her side and part
From the very start.

“All I want is you!
 My whole heart I give in turn
To be forever masterly true
 As sun-stars burn
In the brow of heaven;

Aye, to die even
To prove you my love, to outbrave
Death, that I may save
You from your young grave.

“To the King! Once there,
He shall learn too how you vie
With what in spirit is high and fair
As yonder sky!
Up now and away
To the King, I say,
He to give you your life, or I
To draw my last sigh,
Take my turn to die!”

Nor sooner said
Than they stood before the King,
The Prince prepared to forfeit his head
For his treasoning,
To ask her life, to plead
That she should be freed,
To stay such death, to point the King
The low loathsome sting
And wrong of the thing.

Soon as he came to speak
Of love, told the Crown his love,
Blood was up to the King's each cheek,
Such word was enough,
As past all bounds the King
Fetched his sword one swing
Of death—now was an end of words
As sire and son crossed swords
At their council boards!

Fierce they fought to kill,
Our Prince to defend her life,
Each one the other's soul to spill
By mighty strife
Till blood flew wild in air,
Pelted the wall-beams where
Gold was knit into lilac thread—
One thrust through the head
And the King was dead!—

Long live the King!
Prince no more, but King instead
By force of all righteous reckoning,
When truth is said,
This truth, that men must glue
To the thing they do,
Nor lives there the Savior to save
Man from his merited glave,
Hell-hearts from their grave.

Did she not love him then
As there she clung to his heart
For her noblemost man among men
To do his part
For love of what is right
In his lion sight?
Love is there, both her love and his,
True as each star-beam is,
And the upshot this:

One savage king goes down,
A son steps in to take his place,
To win a bride, to wear a crown,
To bless his race
By an end of war,

By one gentler law
Than seeks to crush to win a thing
By rape and murdering,
Though he be a king.

And she now for Queen
Of her own country and his,
Never sword to hang between,
Her God-law this:
If you would conquer through
To the end in view,
You shall put you to any test,
Unweaken, bare your breast,
Do your best.

SUMMER DAYS

I

SUMMER days,
Sunbeam flaxen days,
Always coming and going
So men may be guessing and growing,
Never to capture the small end of knowing,
Nudge at me now with your elbow-light,
Soul is there, though out of sight!
I know your cunning ways,
O summer days!

II

Morning hours,
Fresh among the flowers
Of my summer-scented day,
Oh, tell me a little of your way
You take all heaven in the hollow of a hand
While I may hold but my grain of sand!
Lend me of your perfect powers,
Flower among the flowers,
O morning hours!

III

Afternoon
Of a day of June,
Have a way with you to be
Just a little more in touch with me
To hint a bit of what I would be knowing,

Your trick of coming so and going,
How you keep my finch in tune,
How you mock the moon,
O afternoon!

IV

Summer day,
Ambush amber day,
So much of me glows like you
Out yonder in your robin-egg blue
I wonder if I am there instead of you,
Or is there room enough for us two
Where my sun-flies sing and play,
Dancing their life away,
O summer day!

V

Summer breath,
Not a lisp of death
You whisper among the leaves,
Never an accent whimpers or grieves;
Always your long deep draught of locust you get,
Or the upturned lip of mignonette,
As there your whisper whispereth
There shall be no death,
O summer breath!

VI

Summer night,
Looking dark and bright,
Tell me of her who is gone,
Of her whom my spirit lived upon;
Show me once more one look of her perfect face,

Summer Days

The star-soul in it and moonbeam grace—
Your dark to show me her bright
Kind eye and oversight,
O summer night!

VII

Perfect night,
Not a flaw in sight,
Give me of your power to go
The way of all Beauty, for that way so
I see her steps, like the orange glow
Of stars, to follow their flight,
Keep eternity in sight,
O perfect night!

GLOXINIA

GLOXINIA is a flower
Grows in my garden-spot, tops the end
Of my muscadine-bower—
Once there came a child
Looking so like a friend,
Like a tiny meadow-flower,
Cooed at me and smiled,
Then straight off to my garden-spot flew,
Gathered gloxinia, red and blue,
Then back to me and said:
Which will you have, the blue or the red?

There I looked into the child's eyes
To see a blue wonderful surprise
That I should stop to think,
Keep looking at my meadow-pink
Till now I scarce could see,
For looking at her so,
Her flowers she held up to me
Like her own gloxinia-glow,
As there I caught her to me and said:
You too are perfect blue and red,
Oh, give me yourself instead!

My perfect flower never died
Because I kept it close inside
Where love which is closest loves to hide—
Should there be much or little meant,

By just one such garden incident,
 'T is much to me—she put her face
 Forever in my picture-place—
 Two small pink hands which tried once to speak
 Still drum their dreams against my cheek—
 Look, if you will, to see
 How much a thought of it meant to me!

Soon, how soon she grew
 The woman—how truly too
 She kept her child-red and human blue,
 And I most past and gone
 For such cheek-bright girl to look upon—
 So, too, too well I knew how she
 So fully had forgotten me
 As if I never were born—
 There 's life, I thought—there 's the rub
 Makes life just mock and rubadub,
 So soon we are lost and gone!

Always I longed to speak,
 If haply I might mind her
 Of that one far-off flower-week,
 One garden-spot she left behind her—
 So are we wont to think
 Of those we tie to by every knot,
 How they, in turn, will forget us not,
 Will hold to us by the counter-link—
 What use that I now should think
 She would remember such long ago?—
 She would not know, she would not know!

It was one August afternoon,
 Each harvest-fly was in tune
 For sun-dance in rigadoon,

Now I stood watching my maple-twigg
 Rock a robin to sleep,
Plucked at a yellow tulip sprig
 Holding one blossom in its keep—
I thought how the sky is dumb for vain,
 Holds me for life in doubt,
 Mocks me by fling and pout
Now my flower could never come again.

Always so I thought of her,
 My child once with her gentle tap
At my heart, her pretty off-hand hap
 And flower-face, her little stir
For a June breeze so at my cheek,
 Like the sweet Heaven were trying to speak—
This way I took to ponder:
 She so young, I so beyond her
As only to hope in vain
 How, maybe, she might one day wonder
If I would look in her heart again,

When—sudden as any thought,
 I listened, knew I caught
Such two soft steps near me, just behind,
 As might have been whispers of wind—
Next was one silverly voice
 Sent my heart leaping like jumps of joys:
“You will not remember them,
 These flowers—once they had a stem,
 Once they were red and blue,
 Wide-spread and tufted too,
Once I offered them to you!

“Will you not have them now,
 Such long years they kept their vow

To come to you some day, somehow?"—

There I looked into the same eyes,
More was there now than just surprise

That I should keep looking so
Where soul chokes in one overflow

Of eyes of such human blue,
So wonderfully lasting true

I was fastened there as I only said:
"Oh, give me yourself instead!"

NO MAN'S FRIEND

GET under his bull-heel
If you would up to the full feel
His pinch,
Such a man as once I knew
Liked to do his worst for you
To see you flinch!
I look, while every now and then
I see the snapping lynx in men!

See such a man how he tries to cut
The ground from under you,
While fact is and wonder too
He sees not, more than a mariput,
How, anyhow he may slash to cut,
Do his devilish best to do
His very devilish worst for you,
He only chops himself in two!

My Gladys is a girl I know
Thinks of me so
'T were more than folly he should try
To catch her eye,
Small use that he try her heart
By his trappy art
To pull her away from me
For love or deviltry.

No Man's Friend

Yet here is your sort of man
Thinks he has the master plan
By which to trick as he shall choose,
Small matter you, if you win or lose!
One kind of man who likes to think
Right is tricked by puff and wink!
Watch him thresh his wings to a blot
Like flies trapped in a treacle-pot!

Partners were we,
I and he,
To hew down pine or tamarack,
Half to have our guineas back,
Half for the profit
And lordliness of it—
So for sake of such outcome clear
We were now partners just a year.

Knowledge was mine of how to do
The best thing best,
Of each way to slash or hew
Cow-oak as it should be drest
For market for very best,
While as for him, his whole hold
Was on his gold,
To know how worlds are bought and sold.

My wisdom he must have for gain,
Or his guineas were in vain;
His gold I must have, else I
Could not match him as man to man
For profit on the partner-plan—
That way was it he made bold
To lend me largely of his gold
To give me foot and master-hold.

Things in the year went well,
 There was profit to tell,
Princely luck was about,
 We were satisfied in and out
And friends too—leastwise I dreamed
 He was noble as he seemed,
Could not have played me untrue,
 Deep demon too.

How perfectly a man mad is
 To think he prospers his way
Of stealing from you your Gladys,
 To think he has nought to pay
But joy to have done you his worst,
 And not a thought how the thing is curst
As he sails on to boast his strut
 Like a ship will with a hole in her gut.

My Gladys was joyful-fair,
 Held hard to each truth,
Made no quarrel with her care,
 Made the most of love and youth,
Kept her whole soul for me in sight,
 Bowed to one Monarchy of Right—
Yet in spite of such sweetness in her
 This wolf-hound thought to trick and win her.

Bells he copied, so his words
 Should ring like flocks of garden-birds;
Put the style-angle to each joint,
 Brought his chin-brush to a point,
His sermon as well,
 For most part to tell
How fine he was and proper good
 As not another could be or would.

No Man's Friend

How soon he saw he could not have her
By chin-points, thin palaver,
Saw the queen in her, high mind
 To be not in touch with his condor-kind!
So now he must show the claw,
 Strike at righteousness and law,
Brute force bring to his cause
 To show the snow-leopard lynx he was!

For only next day he demanded
 I pay him, as I owed, in full,
I undollared and short-handed—
 There was the heel of the bull!
Pay I must, my bond to the letter,
 Else I was shackled in his fetter
For prisoner, and what better,
 I his penniless poor debtor?

I in ruin, that way he thought
 My Gladys was to be caught,
Made to give up her hold
 Of me, to take him for his gold
And power, as if he could buy
 Love such as hers to die!
How well he knew his best hold
 Was his grip of gold!

How little he knew of love,
 Less than the billing dove!
More was her heart than ever bound
 To this heart which she had found
In me, while the more he struggled
 To part us, tricked and juggled,
And all was said and done,
 There were we the more mightily one!

So he lost her and lost me
 By his leopardy!
Nor made these two all his losses—
 How certainly one conquering cause is
Ancestor of many losses!
 For now he was minus me
With my sightedness to see
 Lumber-tricks for mastery;

Could not send his great mill cashing
 Shingles, for there were slashing
And chopping to be cunningly done
 And he no knack at it under the sun!
In just a year, with all his trying,
 Men saw his profits surely dying!
In two years only, to a day,
 More debts than shingles—nothing to pay!

Things make for Right—
 There 's your fight!
Nor make for wrong,
 Save for an hour
To build men strong
 To aquire Power
By their fight
 To come right.

SUFFICIT

MAKE a sign of the cross!
What is it?
Scratch away more of the moss:
"Sufficit";
Ah me, but the writing is old
Under the mold,
As the meaning is new
And grasses lax
At their hiding of facts
Which were few
Though they sleep
Where the grave is shoal, meaning deep.

Tear more grasses away
At the base;
Get what dates have to say
Of the case:
Thirteen hundred and twenty-two
Under the dew!
Half a cross at the top
Of a Fleur-de-lis,
Which is all you could see—
And they stop
At the cross
Who would dig for meaning under the moss.

Six centuries ago,
 Nearly that,
Where mountain-peaks grew snow,
 Where their plat
Laid once one carpet warmish green
 The lap between
Two summits left and right
Which shortened up the sun,
Trained flowers to run,
 Men to fight,
 Lived a king
Who ruled his country by whip and sting.

He ruled quite alone
 To his whim;
Bent men to crawl to his throne,
 Beg of him
For leave to marry, leave to pray,
 To work or play;
Men and children he knew,
Knew the half they did
From bib to lid
 As they grew
 In his grace
To smirk and wince at his red dead face.

Armored knights fell to pray
 At his feet,
All for some love-lady fay
 Proud and sweet,
Nor dared they to ask for her hand
 Without his command,
As they bowed to dust
In their steel cold chain

At a dread of the reign
 Of his lust,
 For they knew
He would seize the girl if it pleased him to.

Two alike brother knights
 And twin-born,
Who pleaded their wrongs and rights
 To his scorn,
Bowed down one day to press their cause,
 And the story was:
They had both made their way
To a Princess' heart,
But each suitor apart
 Day and day;
 Neither knew
The other was pouring his heart out too.

Being wholly alike,
 Face and frame,
As much in smile and glike
 As in name,
She never once knew them apart
 In giving her heart,
So each had her hand,
Had her honest word
His cause should be heard
 By command
 Of the king,
Who knew first best how to settle the thing.

"You shall fight," said the king,
 " 'Till the breath
Of one ceases, fight the thing
 To the death;

Whichever survives, on my life,
 Shall have her for wife;
Whichever refuses
To stab like a man,
Cut to kill where he can,
 Or chooses
 Not to fight,
Shall pay for the farce with his head this night."

They were brothers, were twins,
 Cheek by jowl;
To stab to death with steel fins
 Would be foul,
As foul as his word, which was worse,
 Far worse than his curse;
If they fought so one fell,
What pledge could they name
That the other should claim
 Her as well?
 While beside,
Who would kill a brother to win a bride?

At the palace that night
 Was a ball;
Old and young danced to delight,
 King and all,
'Till revel dragged out of the feast
 A king for a beast,
A man matched to the mire!
Red wine in gold bowls,
Like blood dipped into souls
 Made of fire,
 Gave cause
For a king that night to show what he was!

“Bring them here, your two brats
Of one gaze;
They shall both perish like rats
In a blaze;
If kings would love, then no man weds!
So off with their heads!
She will do me a while
With her pheasant's grace,
Cheek and chin-dimpled face
And young smile;
She shall know
A king may love if she will or no!”

The three lovers meantime
Took to horse,
Struck a path clean through the thyme
And gorse,
Over mountain-shaft shot through the snow
Like an arrow and bow,
Into valley and farm
At a fire-bell's pace
With their lady of grace
Brave and calm,
'Till they stood
Where we stand now, at this edge of the wood.

A pale moon tumbled red
On a cloud,
Half like a blood-spattered head
In a shroud;
Two twin stars, straight as two eyes,
Looked out of their skies
'Till a cloud like a cup
Cut in two, dropping lids

No light ever thrids,
 Closed them up;
 There was death
In the night-moon's mist where they drank a breath.

Here was Fall at the door
 To knock hard:
Their summer should dance no more
 On the sward;
One stab of frost and your trees
 Show fight to the knees,
Snap back, puff red, stretch their claws!—
What good will it do
And they face one or two
 Of God's laws?
 Better go
By a cut of cold than melt with the snow.

All the law is severe
 At its best;
Love shall be put, tear by tear,
 To a test,
Nor find a way upon earth
 To capture its worth,
'Though the test be here,
While he drops your prize
Who plays victor and dies
 Without fear;
 Who would miss
A last breath to whisper "A man was this"?

How a day is made great
 By its end!
Earth ceases, love is too late
 To contend:

Beauty comes last and stands first
 And hell do its worst!
Who will venture to show
A path to a flower
With a sky for a bower?
 And below
 Or above
Is it not all Beauty to die for love?

At the castle this night,
 Unconfined,
Fierce glee struck out full might
 At the wind;
Red revel strutted, with spew and pitch,
 To the last low ditch;
Cups and beakers of gold
Tipped up, leaned in touch,
As if they, too, had had too much
 To uphold
 In extremes,
A king down bellowing in his drunken dreams.

And just here at this edge
 Of the wood,
Hand locked to hand for love's pledge,
 Here they stood,
Two oaks, one vine about both,
 Three souls and one oath;
The twin stars looked out,
Two longing wide eyes
In dumb darkened skies
 Hung about;
 What shall hide
A look from the deeps when soul is bride?

Over there the mad whirl
 Of a torch
Blazed out on their swill and swirl
 Of debauch,
While here, to one wail of a mort,
 These gentle ones wrought
From the rot in a king
Such fine streaks as lie
Where young May-clouds must die
 In their spring,
 As violets leap
To pick their bloom from a dunghill's heap.

Here, just here in this waste
 Where we stand,
They died, nor scarce took a taste
 In the land
Of life, as here just they dropped
 Like blue-bells are cropped
By a pinch of frost
When the sun is gone,
As a breath is born
 To be lost—
 Here they died
Where spoonflowers feast and the rain-birds bride.

Here together they died
 Hand in hand;
Here have they slept, side by side,
 By command
Of the king; while those who would know
 How the world is so,
Why it fails at the top,
What Beauty is wove

Sufficit

If men perish for love,
They will stop
At the cross
To look for meaning above the moss.

MAN AND BIRD

I

ONE melody-bird struck his notes to play
Into my window by open day

As if to say:

“I sing—you never sing!

I pipe my soul into shrills

Would make the eagle dip his wing

To listen—you mumble your ills

Over the way,

Most as men have done alway,

As if this soul were of shotted clay!

II

“I tie to my tree,

You look up to me!

Did I drop to your earth

For its angleworm-worth,

'T was that I might stomach me

To rise again to stick to my tree

To whiffle my vago-note

Lip never caught, man never wrote,

My home in my tree-top air

For what is fair,

You to your gizzard and gulp of care!

III

“Castle your brain
Against the rain,
Coddle you warm
Against the storm,
While I, all spirit I,
Make nests in the sky,
In forests of fingers, my spars
To point me to the stars,
To show me my way to defy
What you hold to be worst,
One sentence that all must die,
As if a decree of God could be curst!

IV

“You plough the earth,
I plough the air!
Say, what is it worth,
Your ground-owl share,
Matched with my birth
In the spirit-air,
Your earthworm earth
Like a deluge of dearth
In your field of care?
Up to the winds I am singing,
Out on the winds I am free
To my sky to be clinging,
To my highmost to see
What Beauty is singing,
Is ringing in me
To be up to be kinging
Eternity!

V

"You duck, you quail
 At the wind-shot hail
 As if craving
 A place you may sleep in,
 Half a rat-hole to creep in
 To be saving
 Your pelt from the sting of a sliver,
 Your soul from a quiver!
 Have a look to me
 In my open tree:
 Storm after storm shall shelter me,
 Each blast of a mad-cap night
 To load me with might!
 What storm shall down me to death
 And I rise on its breath?

VI

"How wonderful the trees are,
 Much as your Christ or Cæsar
 To do their part!
 They capture the wealth of earth
 By each fine-fingered art,
 Silver-leaf, pear-gold worth,
 Anything to give Beauty birth,
 To lift it away from you
 So you must climb to capture it too,
 Must look up to get the goldenly blue!

VII

"To the trees
 In their limbs of wings
 To make my song as I please!
 Hope whistles and rings,

Man and Bird

Thought everywhere sings
More than the bread and bone of things,
More than your hog-ox browsing
In stubble or leasow,
More than pelt and belly-housing—
As if what I seem to see must be so!

VIII

“Up to the winds I am singing,
 Out on the winds I am free
To my sky to be clinging,
 To my highmost to see
What Beauty is singing,
 Is ringing in me
To be up to be kinging
 Eternity!”

IN THE NATURE OF THINGS

THERE 's a nature of things!

I see it where I look
Into sky or nook!

From a planet's rings
To a bubble's wings,
Whether in or out

Of a soul or snout,
There 's the certain subtle nature of things!

What say, will you doubt me that?

Have an eye to the summer gnat
To see him poking and raking at
Life as you do, yet he comes
To life just where the sunbeam drums,
And so he wallops and hums!

There 's a nature of things

In a cow-boy gait!
As he loafs or springs
He is early or late
At his task, while so,

As things come and go,
He makes his way by force
Of his level best in the natural course.

Beauty is everywhere I look,

In a crow-horn song, in the dipper's flock,
Beauty to come to on your own hook,

In the Nature of Things

You to stay there to wield your power
 Like a star does, like a passion flower,
 And you make what of it but you
 Capture the Power and Beauty too?

Once was this fine story told
 In Pembroke, as men grew old,
 Liked each evening to tell
 How pure goodness went well,
 How evil came to nought,
 How Beauty is wrought
 By conflict,—and so
 By one evening ember-glow
 This story came to a pitch and go:

By one sweet-fern bank of the sea,
 Where sumac coddles the wild pea,
 Where the gray sea eagle overhead
 Takes one blue cloud for his bed,
 Lived once brother and sister together—
 Never men asked a question whether
 Or how far they loved each other—
 Never were such sister and brother
 So heart-bound to one another
 As they lived, each one to do
 What the other fancied most,
 Each to the other that kind and true
 'Till each in the other was wholly lost.

What a wonder-thing
 In the world to see
 Is the love I sing,
 Is the soul to be
 All the best it is,
 All the rest to miss

Nor a whimper fling!
Just the royal ring
Of a soul for king
Is the soul I sing!

Brother and sister, just they alone,
No others but were dead and gone!
Each day came as each day went,
Rose-red topped the firmament
Of love each morning and night,
Each kept the other first in sight,
Each to do the choice royallest thing
Would put the other to leap and sing.
Scarce would he leave her to go her way
Apart from him a part of a day,
But he must have her at stop and start—
So was she bound in his true wide heart.

Stop to think a bit
Of the love of it,
Of the way they had
Which was high and glad,
Of the heart they knew
Which was human true
To an end of thought,
And it mattered not
What they lost or got
As the world-way goes
Or the grub-worm knows,
Only this to think,
There is love to keep
As a planet's wink
Drops never to sleep,

In the Nature of Things

There is love to do,
There is love to be
What is noblest true
Eternally!

Lovers came—there she listened
Under her moon-magic sky,
Eyes as twin stars glistened
Right as her soft long sigh
Whispered: “Love is a thing to keep,
Love which is full and true;
More is there not to reap,
Less is there not to do
Than hold to love which is best—
There 's the plain way manifest!”
Loved she so the brother more
Than any one of her handsome score
Of lovers, as each one came
To coax her by his breath of flame,
There grew small use to tease her—
Never a man in the world could please her.

So the brother—not once he thought
Of maiden, nor ever knew
If a sweet girl eyed him or not,
So was his heart to the sister true
As this, that he let them pass,
Each pretty smiling longing lass.

'T was thus they loved each other so
One scarce could let the other go,
Yet each would say: “Let love be best!
If you be wholly happiest

To love another beside me,
So I would have it, so let it be!"

Each day went and came with them
Much as it will with others,
Love each day dangled like a gem
Above life's littlesome mock bothers;
So grew the heart large for kind doing,
Much as the spirit-end of things
Makes for nobling and truing,
High as deep heaven pitches and swings!

They showed their soul in the world their way,
They had the gem of a thing to say
For couragement to me or you,
They found the best was the blest to do
And did it and loved it too;
Never once thought of what they lost
By any way men count the cost,
Only one purpose of heart and mind,
Just to be true and kind
And high inclined.

What a thing is this
I see each day,
Each new precipice
Just a higher way
For me to climb
To my point sublime,
Every inch I lose
Just a foot to gain,
Eagle peaks to choose
Or the under-plain
For an undertow
Where I trip, and so

In the Nature of Things

Where I learn the land,
 Where I learn to stand,
 Where I take command!

One full evening, as men have said,
 Never they saw the moon so red,
 Grinding through a dome of scud,
 As I would say, like a wheel of blood.
 People came as before and went
 Their ways—there was livenment
 To hear the sea-swash run trebles,
 See lovers play for luck at pebbles
 And lips—I remember how two
 Made the most of it in the mist,
 Cheek to cheek, oh how they kissed
 And coiled in each other's arms for true,
 Not as brothers and sisters do,
 But there they sat in the sand,
 Heart in throat, hand in hand
 As brothers and sisters know not of,
 All another kind of love.

What a thing it is
 In the world to know
 There waits for you a kiss
 If you come or go;
 Always a smile
 At your door for you,
 Always a heart
 To the fore for you,
 Always an eye
 Like a spot of sky
 Looking true and high,
 Never room about

For a taste of doubt
 But your world is fair
 And you get your share
 If such love be there!

Just that evening, by strange hap,
 Right as sister and brother eyed
 Where the two lovers cooed and sighed,
 Came to their door such gentle tap
 As might have been the passing rap
 Of a wren—never was heard
 Softer sound when leaves are stirred,
 As entered the cottage, little daunted,
 One little woman, so very old
 Each cheek looked blighted and cold,
 As if her very soul were haunted
 With winter—like sorrow-pits her eyes
 Oozed water always, as if they wept
 By habit and never slept,
 Neither widened nor looked wise,
 As there before brother and sister she planted
 Knees down, hands up as if to pray,
 Then half sermoned, half chanted
 This tale, and you shall say
 If she did wrong to speak that day:

“Your god-father” (she spoke
 To the brother now)
 “One day awoke,
 God knows how,
 To find in a nest
 In an autumn bough
 Two infants, twins,
 At their very best,

In the Nature of Things

By pinnacle-chins
Of dimples blest,
Eyes of a kind
To swallow such light
As leaves men blind
Or crippled in sight,
So you would say
They were eyes to see
Like stars at play
In immensity.
Beautiful they,
These twins were now,
As there they lay
In their autumn bough,
And such smiles at play
You would marvel how
They were cast away
In a jack-oak bough,
As if leaves were wings,
Knew a way to fly
Beyond mortal things
By some highway high,
Bore these cherubs up
Like a cradle-cup
To their breast of sky
Ere they learned to die.
There they lay, such new
Twin sisters one day,
Yet none ever knew
How they flew that way.
Now your father came,
Bore them lightly down,
Gave them his name,
Called them his own

His bachelor way;
 Never child had he known
In the world to say
 'Father.' So they grew
Wise and gentle too,
 Yet the father saw
How men hunger for
 One son and heir
All their soul to share,
 All their gold-heap care.
Mother was I
 Of twenty sons,
Never daughter to eye
 Like a sun-bee runs
To his rose to sigh,
 To his sweets to die,
So one day I said
 To your father this:
'Give me instead
 Of a son to miss
Your Beatrice,
 And the profit is
A daughter to me,
 And a son to you—
There 's a point to see,
 And a thing to do!'
Nor sooner said
 Than I brought you here,
Took the girl instead
 To my heart to rear!
There you have it now,
 Just the whole truth how,
By such sweet cabal,
 You were both made one,

In the Nature of Things

How the thing was done,
And you not brother and sister at all!"

What a curious thing now that thing is to tell!
Just a look—they were brother and sister no more—
One could see the spirit in their eyes jump and swell
As heart leaped to heart now as never before,
Face lost in face at one clasp and forever,
Lips fastened as if they would unfasten never,
As there by the nature of things I could learn
How Beauty is Power, Power is Beauty in turn;
How, just by the nature of things, what is Right
Makes headway and one proper day comes to light
By the genius of Beauty and Kingdom of Right!

There now as he held and kissed her,
Man and wife, not brother and sister,
Came the thought, What a subtle thing
Right is with its Beauty-wing
To couch in one winter-bush unseen,
Hatch the white iris and God's green
Out of a winter's tooth and spleen
To come to such power by spring
As puts purple eyes in an orange wing
To fly where Beauty is endless King.

All their best in the world they had done;
More is not known under the sun;
Took to each other for mighty love,
Brother and sister, nought above,
Never a gain were they thinking of
Save to love and hang close, each to each,
As red cheeks hang to my morning peach,
As there they waited, not once thinking

In the Nature of Things

77

How love laughed at them and was winking
Their way, and he set the trap,
 Never slip-up or mishap,
They in their own goodness caught
 Right where they hoped and heeded not,
To show how Right, like a plover's wings,
 Rises to flight by the nature of things.

As you see and I,
 God is in His sky
Not to rule by fear,
 Not to rule at all,
But the world is here
 At your beck and call
If you strike to do,
 As is meant you should,
For the most in you
 For eternal good,
For all Beauty there
 In the ball of air
That you get your share,
 Nor you fall aside
Where the pit is wide
 And your hands are tied—
There 's your light and shade
 As the world is made,
While not the Lord Final King of Kings
 Changes ever his nature of things.

PEARL

TRY a hand at it once,
Try a month of hunts,
Then tell me if you have found a girl
Half like my honest gentle Pearl
In her teens
And greens!

Hunt the world over you,
Try moon-spaces too
To see if you find a lip like hers
To whisper as the glee-bird stirs
At her nest
And best!

I know I heard you say,
In a flippant way,
I am older than she is by half!
So much the more I love her laugh
With its tune
Of June!

So much the more is she
All aglow to me
By what I see in her leaping heart,
Such joy as never knew an art,
With her leaven
Of Heaven.

And so because of you
 Who love her too,
 I am to lose her, for you are young,
 You are to cling where I have clung
 In my sway
 And day.

You think you love her indeed,
 Have a heart in need,
 The fury of passion to have and hold!
 I may not love, since I am old,
 Have a stoop
 And droop.

Have you once thought of this,
 How these arms will miss
 The sweet soul they were clinging to
 Before she came to know of you
 At your gloze
 And pose?

I am to know no more,
 As always before,
 A touch of her lip, her eye to look
 Sky-scenes, like a rested brook
 Gathers haze
 And blaze.

You are to give her now,
 In the lip and brow,
 Your kiss, while I am to let her go!
 I am too old to love her so
 For her arm
 And palm,

For her dimples and chin
And her satin skin!
Is love, then, only a power to see,
Something which means to die in me
For the lack
Of back?

Her soul and mine are one
All sides of the sun,
Grew so the very day she was born
To me from yonder coast of dawn
For my guide
And bride.

So you take her to your care,
But you hear me swear
She 'll not give you her love which is mine
More than the stars give up their shine
To these flocks
Of rocks!

Lover and loved and so
You may try to know
Only what the world would have you think,
How love is but the passion's wink,
Or a breath
Of death.

Am I, her father, then,
But the least of men,
Now you have taken away from me
Only what I may touch and see
By my mite
Of light?

Her father! Now you know
 How I love her so,
 As you could not, so my truth appears,
 Take my place in her smiles and tears
 In the climb
 Of time.

You loved her first to-day
 Your swamp-robin way;
 I loved her when she could claim, God knows,
 Little more than hands and toes,
 Scarce a jot
 Of thought.

Take her, have her to keep,
 While I drop asleep!
 More is her soul than you know or guess,
 Was not made to grow less and less
 Like her eyes
 And size.

More she shall be to me
 Than you now may see;
 More she shall grow as her tan cheeks die,
 More is one life than all the sky
 Now I know
 Her so,

Now I know and for truth
 Soul is least in youth;
 Whittles the nose thin, stops up the eyes
 To get a new other kind of size
 Than all thought
 Has wrought.

Have her—my love is best—
 You may have the rest,
For best must win in the long-time run,
 Soul is more than is under the sun—
 So I climb
 As I chime!

KNOW THYSELF

I

ODS-BOBS, but how he could write!
You could see him that way all day writing
Into the night-deep—wrong or right
Neither here nor there, he sent that kiting
With his stocks he stocked and mightied by his writing.

II

“Puffs” and “ads” are what he wrote,
Which sting and steal, noiseless as a padder,
Prick poison in to suck blood out,
Wind-galled, bloated as a bladder—
So there you have your genuine puff-adder!

III

“Thistle” is good, not because
It is good, but just because he said it;
Aside from righteousness’s laws
He could put whole gold-heaps to your credit—
So he tickled the public paunch and fed it.

IV

One by one his patrons grew
Apace in the world, came rich and mighty
By doing as he told them to,
Bought dog low, sold out when it was flighty—
So he made the market bloom, so made it blighty.

Know Thyself

v

Discontent came now he saw
 How others prospered by his flying,
 His own small all he sweated for
 Enough just to keep him sighing, lying
 To send his Thistle enterprises flying.

vi

So said he, "and why not I
 To richen and let the others scribble?
 I tire of supping on a sigh,
 Of taking life in by the nibble
 And my disciples there plump gut and bibble."

vii

Next day this thing caught his eye:
 " 'Nettle' shares net forty by the showing,
 Price as low as dividend is high,
 Fortunes for the asking most—no crowing
 Is this, so up to pluck and get you going!"

viii

Why not buy?—The thing is new:
 Never he heard of it before;
 Reads so as if it must be true;
 The more he reads to figure, score by score,
 The more he likes it—never heard of it before.

ix

Down pockets for all he had—
 Price is low, as stock exchanges quote it!
 He 'll stake his luck on 't, good or bad,
 —Luck is all a split ship needs to float it—
 And the lie was all his own—he cooked and wrote it!

PETER ROUBLEMINT

ONE way is to get the most of things,
Another to get the most of you—
Which would you say the more profit brings,
Or which were nobler of the two,
You to make the most of the world,
Or the world to make the most of you?

Little comes to us to think
Each way out, which were best,
Or put it to the test,
So much somehow most men shrink
From doing their sovereign best
For no kind of greed-gain manifest.

Being better a man shall make
Most of him than he stuff his craw
For pastime or gullet's sake,
I see this perfect equation-law:
Let a man do his worst,
He is conquered from the first.

Here 's a story once was told
Puts this plain truth manifold:
My man was the groundling-man,
Built his soul on the ground-floor plan
So to get close to earth
To tap its gold and melon-worth

Peter Roublemint

Pie-fly fashion—he knew how
Life is all stomach and all now
Or never, this world to be got
And swallowed like an apricot,
His masterpiece of a job.
Since man is equipped to gnaw and mob,

Nimblesome fingers to dig for gold
The tree-root way to keep his hold,
So down he went under ground,
Bored and burrowed into clay,
Hung to his purpose night and day
By the tooth and purpose of a hound.

Soon his sky was dullard earth,
Mud-bank heaven, sand for cloud,
Nor look-up nor pimple worth
Of light, so down he bowed
To worm, to wrestle and root,
Since gold is always under foot.

Nought above him, sky shut out
And sunbeam-night, each gentle pout
A tulip or jack-oak has,
Freshets of stars no more overhead
To play their fountains in the grass,
His all about him the same as dead,

His was just jacknasty life,
Peoplehood he left behind,
This soul-flower, petals of heart and mind,
For gold only, so now his strife
Was digging pit into pit
For gold and for more and more of it.

Gold overhead, gold underneath,
Gold only to bite and breathe,
Here or there one touch of shine,
Never sky-look nor touch divine
Like I see in a single star
To point me ever never so far.

There he was in for no way out,
The one path back to light he lost,
So now began to count the cost
When leisure took him to look about—
He had compassed an earth-right,
But where in earth was his birthright?

His fields he left behind,
White syringa sky-inclined—
Down in the west his scarlet sun
Shows nought is ended or begun,
For there just over the way
Is always another different day—

His popinjay-bird jumping to sing
He could have no more—those days were gone
When a bugle of a throat is born
To make his lilac morning ring
For the heart in it and soul—
White heaven tied to a rose's bole.

Behind him were dimples in the sea,
White new pebbles, sparks of sand
For mottoes of eternity
To show how Soul is in sight and hand—
Yet once he grew so gold-inclined
All his best else was put behind,

Peter Roublemint

Even her high-minded look
 She gave him before he descended,
The girl whose soul was one welfare-book
 Of Beauty which is never ended,
Her cheek of the sun-apple glow,
 Who lost him and who loved him so.

See how a man who fixes his goal
 Of gold or somewhat other to get
Contrives, after all, just to find his soul
 By very means of hindrance and let,
For look to see now how this groundling
 Found himself to be a foundling!

He dug his pit in the ground,
 Gold above him and around
To where he could fasten his hold
 On nought save just his tomb of gold!
Will you then say 't is a law
 Man catches but what he angles for?

But look once to a wider look:
More is outside than in your book!
 Late in his day he grew to discover
He lost flower and field and lover,
 Lost the pure sky overhead
Of green ribbons and pompous red,

His frog-lake where as boy
Soul was synonym for joy
 As up his hill he flew
To where his zinnias bowled him blue
 Or yellow to tempt him to know
Man is greatest to conquer and grow;

For shall he count his cost,
 Taking only what he lost?
 Certain is one truth so plain,
 There 's no loss but counts me gain;
 Not a human kind of cross is
 But yields more than any loss is.

Four fingers to a cross, and true
 One points down, while the other two
 Show the world east and west to you,
 Yet one last finger points you straight
 To zeniths of worlds, all not as great
 As man is by his soul-estate.

Out of sight, underground,
 Piece by piece his soul he found
 By way of one truth multifold:
 Value in him, not in his gold,
 Is what a man comes to find
 Who tries to leave himself behind.

By way of what he lost
 And its double cost;
 By means of what he saw
 Life is all intended for,
 Deep down underground
 Digging for gold his soul he found.

NOW AND THEN

ONCE again we are men!
No sun may set from these hills up here
Where the top is clear;
Foul dust of streets may not sail on an air
Which rolls up above care;
As boys we were friends in suns and rains
And play on the plains;
What then, shall this digging and pigging for gold
Part the ways now we 're old?

Part the ways and days?
You were captain then, stood sharp upon guard
At the hilt of a sword,
While I shouldered arms to take to the ranks;
Only boys at their pranks?
But we took you to heart, pushed you up
From the ranks to the top;
No envy! Not the pout of a whimper then,
Just before we were men.

Only boys at their toys?
Well—is it the width of a stride or span
Which marks you a man?
The cock of a hat or length of head
Or troops you have led?

As boys we were brave—neither sham nor show—
 A look and a blow,
 But no flinching nor low mean malice then
 Just before we were men.

 What a march through the arch
 Of laurel and pine in our knuckled hills!
 Only boys at their drills?
 There was battle, too, but the cutting was kind,
 Many a clip at the wind;
 See them fire to fall back, now the long-boots come,
 At the whip of a drum!
 Yet no blood was dropped; no killing was then
 Just before we were men.

 Perhaps then we were men,
 Have grown less and less from then until now;
 Who shall say why or how?
 Noble manhood then, larger and true,
 'Though the days were but few.
 Is such not the glory of one great hour
 Of love at its power:
 "Call them to come to me once again
 Just before they are men?"

 To war and the fore
 You took up your march down the way of life,
 Gentle war to the knife!
 Soul-wrapped were you in your science of drilling
 For the art of killing,
 While I took to tapping the earth for its mould,
 The truth for its gold;
 What then, shall a difference of thought part the ways,
 Part the ways and days?

Now and Then

Be friend to the end!
These days are few; they were never but few,
All the days old and new;
Through fury of wars and storms without harm
We are out in a calm;
Your hand, old friend, let 's trudge on together,
Nor ask "why" or "whether";
Cheek by jowl, if just for the love we had then,
Let 's be men once again!

GOLGOTHA

I

SKULLS! Now, there, look there,
Out of the sink and every book there,
In under my grate,
Over each window the bone-white pate
Of a skull—through my door
They poke to grin as never before,
One junket of skulls—look you to think
Of those eye-pits peering out under the sink
And not a wink!

My college-chum, see
How they jaw-widen to mock at me
Out clean to the street!
My college-room fire grew hot and fleet,
Light flew out, night flew in—
There now they gape like a look of sin,
Larger and smaller, some come crescent,
With all to one spread of grin incessant
To no point pleasant!

Each new night it was so,
But one such night, I would have you know,
As I watched the grate
I tried to ponder, to dig my pate

Golgotha

To uncloset the thing,
To try to know what good they could bring,
What curse, perchance, in each heavy jaw
Of a bone-bottled head, what bodiless law
They pleaded for.

The owl-hour, understand,
Now ciphered one by one thin cold hand
As I fetched two clips
At a clinker stuck between the lips
Of my grate, when, one head,
One you would know for a long time dead,
One, too, I thought I knew before
In a match at nouns where I lost the score,
Put eyes to the floor,

Put eyes to me,
Or pits of black where eyes should be
With "Friend, there is cold
Clean through me, I was not wholly souled;
My song men took to heart
Nor saw one trick of my tricky art;
Kick the coals to rouse a tinder,
Pack me snug to a sunny cinder—
I was Pindar!

"Look you, now, this head!
I have it still for soul instead;
My fine thought took flight,
Soared to Parnassus' temple-height,
Flew to you down the ages—
Could you keep warm between the pages
Of skulls?—look there how your boots are full
Of skulls to lug, and you play the fool
In your skull-school!

“See I now, full view,
How they would make such fool of you:
There 's Plato under sink
Who taught a wide world how to think,
Such hanging brow I guess
The whole of him was one skullishness
For thinking only—he makes you feel
Your whole heart is put under heel
And under seal!

“Skulls, for love of God!
There in your slop-tub and rubbish-hod
Are skulls, sickish white,
Looking to you out of pits of night
The skull-look, wholly head,
As wholly, too, hard and cold and dead
Now night tingles and the wind lulls
As there in your ceiling like groups of gulls
Are skulls and skulls!

“They did their best, past doubt,
Began the world, had to think it out,
And good or bad,
Just their cold skull was all they had
To clear a path for you,
You to make nobler than what they knew
Who yet were not grown to such spirit-part
As would make the world over, by every art,
Into one great heart

“To throb in tune—in tune
With no skull-song, but with leafy June
Of rose-moss lip
Which will not let the bush-end slip

But puts one blossom there
 To prove how life is sweet and fair
 As death, 'though rooted into sod,
 Will pink and laugh and pout and wither and nod,
 Stand straight as a God.

"A place of skulls, your school,
 Skull for ruler, skulls to rule
 For building head up high,
 Small matter if the finer part should die
 So men may keep their head,
 A casket where spirit lieth dead,
 For see in each bone-box if you can
 One trick of thought which could prove you a man
 On the highest plan!"

II

I sat me by the fire this night,
 Pythagoras, Pindar, Plato too,
 To wonder if they could be right
 That man in the world must be brainful bright
 To prosper or get his due;
 To wonder if thinking were the best
 A man may do—if to force his way
 By Skullhood against the rest
 Must mark his generation best
 Or noblest, as they say;
 To wonder if to gain an end
 Over one brother of weaker mould
 Could count me so high-citizened
 As if I held him for a friend
 To let him keep his hold
 On littler purposes, keep my power

To overmatch him fast in check
That he might gain on me each hour,
Forget once how to mewl or cower,

 We to travel neck and neck;

To wonder if the thing were right
I swing such power because I can
For being born to over-might

In broader brow, keener sight,

 And the end in view a man;

To wonder if the world must come

To this, that skull shall have first place

To strike the soul-power dumb,

Put it off with half a crumb,

 He best who shall win the race;

To wonder if such hard cold thought

As rules men so like a jailer's rod,

This thinking-cap so dearly bought

For best, so hard and wholly sought,

 Be truly a part of God;

To wonder shall a man not share

One divine breath by being great

Enough to never have a care

To put his skull-skill top, to fare

 Better than a brother-mate;

To wonder if after all is said

And done to college-pump it full,

This pig-eyed button-pocket head

Ever one instant pocketed

 The high overwhelming soul—

When, right from one corner, ill at ease

To do his best, as such best can,

Came lantern-eyed Diogenes,

At his wit's end, down on hands and knees,

 Still looking for a man.

III

Right as I sat me thinking,
To wonder, to try to make it out,
Knew the highest best thought is born of doubt,
While I sat brewing, blinking,

Came there out of my curtain
Which hung in the window, folded back
Like a fustanelle by a fancy new knack,
Two steps put soft and certain;

Two eyes, and they were blinking;
Two hands, like May in a spoonwood-bush,
Put out as if they were trying to push
The skulls off and their thinking;

Two words—the lips were parted—
Two small new words I had never known,
Which hugged her lips as sapphires hug a throne,
Soul-haunted and spark-hearted:

“I love”—right there she rested
Till I could pluck up my thought to know
How the words shot forth their summer glow
To pin me, winter-breasted;

To know, too, of their meaning,
Of her, of her sweet new tulip-lip
A man could not mean to ever let slip,
Her and her quiet queening.

“I love”—the words came ringing
So through me I could not think to tell
If they were not some supersensuous bell
Choked off by its own sweet singing.

“I love the bell-berry flying
Free right and left in a slapping wind,
But better the broom-flower which has been thinned,
Stripped and left to its dying.

“I love the Oregon steeping
His wooded waste in his wedded song,
Or the rek of a log-cock all my day long
To put me dreaming, sleeping;

“So love I, too, for fancy
My loon and his night-cry pitiful,
The mouth of a wheatear ditiful,
Moons at their necromancy;

“Love I the icicle pointed
Like a keen forefinger straight to earth
As if to show how all ways of worth
Are deep down and disjointed;

“But more than these I treasure
My poverty-bird with not a song
From his red sad heart all the white day long,
Him and his little measure;

“More, too, I love my grasses
Which blush not nor lift up one sweet breath,
This bay-leaf which flutters so near to death
Right when each August passes;

“More I love the rose-chafer
Digging to coop in his bumble-den
With only a taste of sun here and then,
Life thin as a wafer.

Golgotha

“Here, now, comes my reason
I value to love them so much more
Than choir-birds which run the whole happy score
Of June-tunes just in season:

“Give me my chance to listen,
I put an ear to a finch in tune
Or a nonpareil pinned to a leaf of June—
Oh, how they trip and glisten!

“I put an eye in summer
To watch my jenneting turn a cheek
Of such scarlet to me as wants to speak
For once to one new-comer;

“So come I to such thrilling
As slips through every knot and nerve
Which summer will rapture beyond reserve
Of throat or finger-spilling;

“But what of that fine stronger
Keen frenzy which comes of no eye at all,
Of no ear, of no perch in the skull or gall,
Comes later to stay longer?

“Comes where there goes no listening,
Will track a sea-pigeon to love him more
For his pauper-throat and his lonesome shore
And black wing and no glistening?

“What save a breath of spirit
To see and feel without use of eyes
How my world gets a smalling pit-end size
The nearer I come near it?

“For what the world is lacking
I love it more than for what it gives;
More for one that dies than for all that lives
Is heart-break and soul-racking.

“Shall I not know the better
Fine highest first best of me that speaks
For more than these fly-leaps in days and weeks,
Live soul up to the letter?

“What you fear to be missing
Is flesh-pots, the blood-hot puff of lip
For wallowing to come to another sip
Of my cooing and kissing.

“Just there you stop—no growing
Of love to be greater, like love can,
To round a man out to be perfect man
Whether this skull be knowing

“Or not—mark you my meaning:
Your college-place is the place of a skull
Where soul may die down, heart part may dull
So skull shall be gleaning

“Of other skulls their treasure
To build you a brain to make your way
Up to nerve-tingle and gold to pay
For pleasure still and pleasure.

“I look for love to be holding
More than it shows or may think to feel,
Like a bell has more song than it can peal,
Like sweet chokes yellow golding.

Golgotha

"I look for love which prizes
 Nor taste nor touch nor your gold about—
 Will not the lark put the planet out
 Of his heart when he rises?

"I look to love to be springing
 High as space—there is Plato there,
 Brain bulged out, so much more than his share,
 While to him you are clinging.

"Better you take my judging:
 You may not bunch up soul in a book,
 Nor pack it away in your coppice-nook
 To be budging, snudging,

"Nor keep it to you for shelving
 To hand to me or another there
 Now I see how spirit is wondrous fair
 Beyond lipping or selving,

"Beyond loving or lothing,
 Save that this love longs to bear away
 From what is only the earth-worm way
 Of coming to nothing."

IV

Yes, she was right, I could see,
 Right as right could be;
 But what of this bubble-up of youth,
 Never a handful of heed,
 Ever an armful of greed,
 Nor cares one swish for a swash of truth?
 I could not bear away from her
 And her hand there, the tiny hand
 To point so much I could understand,

To droop down like a Concord-leaf
To win and master me past belief;
So from her hand to beyond the wrist
Where the arm bends in as if to float
Some spring-song, like a swallow's throat,
I listened for and only missed
For lack of a finer ear to snare
What subtle rapture nested there.
The place was rough as any college,
Hands in for digging out old knowledge;
Men forgot how what is truth
Is fine always, age or youth;
One troop of skulls now omniform
Huddled about the grate like rows
Of knowledge, the kind which knows,
To look to coals to keep them warm;
I knew this parlor-trick tribe
Of thought-jugglers, knew their way
Of skull-building to prescribe
Themselves, by song or play,
When, take them for good or for bad,
Just their tough skull was all they had.
So was it I knew the sleek
Quick way to a maiden's heart
Lay through her cherry-lip and cheek,
For you may know I learned my part.
Right at an edge of the window-ledge
Was swinging one branch of orange-flower,
Much as the tongue of a clock gives pledge
To tell, yet will not tell you, the hour.
This I twisted from its stalk—
I knew the flower-power to command,
Such silent mouthful of sweetened talk,
So put it in her locket-hand

To close on, so she might understand
How I, too, meant to be there
For prisoner in her flower-hand fair.
Words I could sparkle like skies
To dangle in her ears and eyes;
Could treble notes to the zenith-tips
Keen as a pair of Pindar-lips.
Had I not learned in my time
How the flesh-and-blood way is first
In this world—soul at its worst
Will scent the blood-line in case of thirst,
Cock up an ear for a drink of chime.
She was no more than just this flesh
Of robin-warmth to be caught
Napping, let me spread my mesh
With cunning of the clap-trap sort
For women, smile and sweet surprise
To trick them like a school of flies!
Beside, did I not love her then and there
The way men love, for her chin and hair
And brow-sowl and little waist
And fingers and ribbon-taste?
What better, or what were they
Save soul-shape pricking through the clay?
Down we sat on the floor
The skulls among, grate before;
Her hand I held—next I drew her
So to me we were cheek on cheek;
Than hers never heart was truer,
While not one word she would speak,
So I caught her cheeks 'twixt finger and thumb
To squeeze one shy word out of its close
'Til her lips grew to one young wild rose
I held there, scarlet and dumb,

Kept their secret, never a sound
To whisper to the world around
But me only—there they came,
Caught my kisses as any flower
Tucks a lip up to take the shower,
Dew-fall, summer-sigh, forked flame.
My face I darkened in her hair,
While underneath where the pearl neck hid
As if that part of her were forbid,
I fastened my lips and longing there,
My fingers at her temples and face,
I rained such kisses in her eyes
As drew their starlight, took my place
Alternate at her throat and lip
To see to it not a sigh should rise,
To let not one small whisper slip,
Held her, arms out, both arms 'round
And fastened and so securely bound
I thought, as truth it seemed, that she
Was part of the very soul of me.
There she lay in my two hands
As a young bird, partly tamed, will lie
For safeness, but half-way shy,
One look-off as if to other lands
And skies—seemed, too, so glad
I should so love her, but all the while
Underneath the sunrise smile
Was one small cloud-look, partways sad,
To tell me how my way of love
All for herself to make the most
Of heart in her and lip and ghost
Was moth-measure, not enough
To come to greatness of the sort
Which makes more mightiness out of worth,

Which knows to hold above this earth
And its sculpin-love, pot-wise thought,
To come to high best, as such best can,
One largest keen love of truth and man,
Soul-upperdom of the stripe to ride
To soar plump-hearted, get outside
This your day-podded livelihood,
This mate-love by which men brood
For a day's chuckle and a pint of good,
So to wing-broaden to make escape
From this bone-mould and finger-fuss
Which pot us to one certain shape,
All minimy to play minnow-ape,
Rough-govern men as an incubus.
Such was her look, which was all there
In her lip-shut and splendid stare,
So, 'though I held her to me fast
In arms—never she once moved—
The one look she gave me proved
My love was small, a dream gone past,
The while I held her, heart and head,
She was not there, but had risen
Like a lapwing from her prison,
While what I held was her cage instead.
She was all as I have seen
Song-swallow rise to hover
Straight above tree-spire, keen
To tempt her plum-fishing lover
To face one heaven of storm and sun,
Only the crowd of stars above her,
So she might not clap wings alone
To cycle 'round the spirit-zone.
So was all of her silence broke
Now she spoke to me—so she spoke:

“Here ’s one truth for your thinking of:
One other love comes above it
Makes a man almost unlove it,
One kind which works not for any gain
Of circumstance to blossom better,
Fears not loss, bafflement, pain;
Will break each shell, each ankle-fetter
To get above self just to make scope
To see outside of life and hope
And fear and each little peoplish way,
To make master—never great for pay!
Here is conflict:—Glut life to the letter,
Follow the law, be man among men,
Yet is there of you another better
Will force an audience again and again,
Will say: Make the most of it, tree and nest,
Follow the world by the honor-way
To love, be loved, come wise each day
To let the laurels ’round you play,
Yet is the thing not your monarch-best.
But more, your very game you play
To make the most of it to live
For what the good world has to give
Will lose you more in another way:
Never a breath you drew
For gain in it, if you knew,
But argued a higher heart in you
Than sings in summer or may be found
Tangled in law-knots which govern ground,
As death to an ortolan that you may breathe
By chopping his song off between your teeth;
I split a bobolink to eat his heart,
While just a thought of his pretty song
He made me all summer long

Will bring me to a stop and start;
Death to all life so you may grow
To keep on living and loving, and lo
Who is there lives and loves it so?
Do what you may for gain to you
With not a thought of others too,
The thing were nobler not to do.
Here is battle: See what you see
Of how you came to be what you are
By such vast slaughter and rank evil
As goes to shame the very devil
For the red flame in it of hellish war—
Would you turn back to such parent breast,
The rough hard heart in it and the rest,
More than this bell-flower breathes or keeps
Putrid dung-pile from which it leaps?
Then is there in you that which turns
Hand against nature, as I see it,
To grow aloof and one day flee it—
This flower-breath rises, but not returns.
You have your crop of better stuff
Which makes for mastery, which is worth
More than all harvesting of earth
To plump up gut, yet crops not enough
To satisfy one honest longing
For higher branches, sunnier singing.”
So she reasoned—I could not answer
When she said, “You be a man, sir,
Of the new type to hang to all best,
Nor count your loss of love and the rest
Which men count better and you count best
To pamper passion, one toss of a groat
To ring at an ear, tickle a throat—
Would you win me you shall rise

To all encumbrance of my skies
To bear a little from earth away
To come to me, more and more, each day
By larger love and finer and true
To one starful, which you never knew
Nor may in your college-lull
Where you dig for God in your human skull."

EDWARD FARNUM SOUTHWICK. OBIT 1855.

I

ONLY seventeen when he died,
The soul-eyed eagle-wingèd boy
Just blossoming, like a pomeroi,
Of brightened brow and the certain stride
 I knew once—I was that young
 I scarcely had mind or tongue
 To tell him how I knew
He was so great and fine and true.

II

So young he was to die,
Just as he put a lip to Spring
To taste without once swallowing;
Could have his pick, could have reached so high
 And death had thought good to spare
 Such May-bush, so uncommon fair
 Of promise to put his mark
In sky-land like an evening spark.

III

As he was about to go
I had but got here, scarcely more
Than flanked my tin soldiers at his door
To give him warning he should not go;

Called to him, found him not there,
Only the whitèd lip and stare
Of eye-light that flashed up
Like cinders from a silver cup.

IV

Beauty had put its mark
In each blue vein of him like a net
To snare the spirit, one star was set
Fast in each eye, I saw the spark
 Meant only Beauty to say
 How fairer he was behind the clay
 Than men may think to dream,
And they get only the goggled gleam.

V

And his life was not begun,
Since there could be no life for him
Of your worldish cock-snipe puppet-whim
To fly-plumb sun-sweets, to have a run
 In stubble, to makè what most
 He could where some poor brother lost,
 To clinch and throttle and thrust,
Make a life of it because he must;

VI

As if a man may not rise
Above this world-wave of life you hold
For the value of its breath of gold,
Its treacle-swim and fleet of flies!
 Shall I take such life to heart
 For being of it and one part
 More than a pomfret drinks
His sea in where he blows and blinks?

VII

Such men do grow, in their time,
Soul too large for one life to mould,
Too fine to perfectly unfold
Before they reach the unclouded clime
 They know of to make their way
 In one rich other kind of day
 Of spirit-blossom-breath,
All out of reach of this life and death.

VIII

There was that of him was sure
To take him outside your swing of thought
And feeling and doing, just that sort
Of spirit which is so fine and pure
 As will not come to a touch
 Of earth to get the shock and smutch—
 Only one dip of wing
In a lake of glass or silver spring

IX

At evening, like he mistook
The mirrored star-specks in a stream
For his true heaven, for so they seem,
Bent him once downward to have a look
 And skim across the wave
 To find there only an open grave,
 Then the one touch of pain
And he was off to his sky again.

X

All surely there was for him
Scarce a place here which he could touch,

So fair was the soul of him and so much
As to put his world about him dim,
 And he but a boy at that,
 And such a man to be coming at
 As only God may know
Why he should have been taken so.

XI

Once in his new garden-bed
He picked a pinkster-flower that I
Might look to see how soon it would die,
The way of perfect Beauty, he said,
 Put it in my pink toy-hand
 To keep 'til I could understand,
 While all the one sweet while
I saw only his heaven-haunted smile.

XII

Oft do I dream one way:
Your soul had in it such vast worth
As not to treasure the toys of earth,
Came only to look once, not to stay—
 And yet you might come again
 In a sweeter new lull of wind and rain
 When men have learned their part
To hold to you by their larger heart.

XIII

You were more than I could see,
And so soon gone again—you
Of the wondrous brow and heart-look through
Of marvellous gentlest mystery

Of soul which could not be read,
Too much was there to be partly said,
And so you went your way—
Would I might follow one clear day!

XIV

Poor Eddy—for so I think
Who may not know things as they are,
Who grasp at shadows for my star
To forge me my chain without a link—
I wonder, and we once meet,
Would you know me as now, or leap to greet
The child you knew before
With his tin soldiers on the floor?

THE APPIAN WAY

WHAT a pity!
She came to town this day,
Linked about in blooms,
New blooms of May,
The which she gathered by the way
From field to city.

No one knew
How she left her home,
Her sky-crowned cottage
To come to Rome
—The larger for the smaller dome—
No one but you.

A word with you:
I saw her pass this way
Towards the ruins;
She would not stay
Nor catch one word I had to say,
But faster flew

To turn aside
Just in the fatal shade
Of Pompey's statue;
Her heart dismayed
Right where a country's hopes were laid
When Cæsar died.

The Appian Way

I heard her sob;
Such stones are strange to tears;
Then she sighed your name;
A thousand years
Have not cut off a maiden's fears
The half a throb.

You drew her here
By tempting her to come;
With no thought but you
She left her home
To join you in the jaws of Rome
For love and fear.

Strange yonder lights
But how they butt to flare
Against the columns
Which stalk to stare
Among all ages crumbling there
On Cælian heights!

What fire is there!
What flint-head rock is gone,
Sunburnt to ashes
To nurse the thorn,
Ashes and thorns men step upon
To thrones of care!

Pleasure and Care,
Twin monsters of the night,
How like Hell's angels
Ye slip the light
To skulk to spit a demon's blight
On all that 's fair!

Say you "Why not?"
Because 't is written still
In all hearts of men,
Thou shalt not kill
One purpose of the human will
Divinely wrought.

Her sweet regard
Is all this world to you;
Once that is gone
What sky is blue?
A day has mourned to leave its dew
On sand and sward.

She waits for you
Just where great Cæsar stood
To trust him to his friends;
All her fine mood
Is bent to bring you peace and good,
And friends are few.

She sought the town
That you might name her fate
Among the ruins;
'T is not too late—
Be master where the cause is great,
Don't help her down!

IN CÆLIS

Her image within
In the clasp of my soul
To beckon and win
Me where time shall unroll
All the planets of space
And not touch her sweet face.

I

ALWAYS I think of her,
Now she is gone;
Her violet eyes, the pure pink of her
Of a summer-day dawn;
Such gentle face, as if spirit
Hovered near it—
So much of her for thinking on
As each new day is born,
Now she is gone.

II

Always I think to see
A look of her,
Just her sweet look as it used to be,
Just the one perfect look of her,
As I would give a whole Heaven to know
She sees me so
As I am now this ripe iris morn,
This bell-blossom day I was born,
Now she is gone.

III

Each day too comes there this
For me to think:
She knows now how my whole life is,
The worst of it, each link by link;
There stretches the imperfect chain,
So little gain
Since last I saw her that sorrow-day
Which dropped its shadow to play
Across my way!

IV

Yet this one thing I know:
She sees for clear
What value love has to come and go
To leave me longing so here;
They know, these everlasting ones
Among the suns,
How Beauty ever keeps on and on,
A thing to think and live upon,
Now they are gone.

V

Her tuberosé pot is this,
The one she kept
Below her window pontifice—
That last day she lay and slept
They died, her flowers so like her they!
A-lack a-day
How Beauty breathes and is gone again,
Much as to say: "Your world is vain
Of pot and grain,

VI

“And so I go my way
Of other skies,
Have had enough of your tumble-day
To long for struggle to rise,
Never enough of its heavy frown
To hold me down,
And so I break away from its rune
To point you my higher noon,
My rarer June.”

VII

Tie to your love your way
Of heavy earth;
Jump lip to lip in passion-play,
How short it lives and is nothing worth!
Out where yonder yellow stars glisten
I look and listen,
Or here where my maple-tree purrs,
My swamp-lark dances in his firs—
What love like hers?

VIII

This was her cottage too;
Each little vase
Took some tint or look which was true
Of her beautiful face—
Her room now, parrot and picture-wall,
Keep her smile and call;
All around is her spirit-mark,
That I through my thickest dark
May look and hark

IX

To find her somewhere near,
Or come to know
Spirit-Beauty is wholly too dear
To crumble under and go
Like a plum does on an autumn spit
For lack of it—
So now I see it by what is plain,
Her whole-soul-look to me again
As that day when

X

She first held me in arms—
I could not know
I was her wild-flower in her palms
And she there clinging to me so;
I could not see nor know her
Till more and more
I grew spirit and bosom-size
To drink love out of her eyes
Whole-hearted-wise:

XI

That way now I may see
How just the same
She keeps beyond and over me
To be my soulfullest aim
To come to her by her higher way,
As she would say,
While so I look trustfully on
To watch for her in yonder dawn,
Now she is gone.

SONG

COMES there nought of sinning,
 Nought of winning;
Life hangs about the wooing
 And the doing;
Mount your pinnacle of thought,
Love is there or life is not.

What comes there good of pleading,
 Good of creeding?
Soul knows a way of growing,
 Way of knowing
How your self-dependent plan
Maps the mastrous kind of man.

Comes nothing of your pining,
 Of your whining;
Spirit goes a-trusting,
 Goes a-justing,
As all value of the rout
Is the grapple, bout by bout.

I catch my star by groping,
 Not by hoping;
Pitch dark to point an iris
 Where the fire is—
Any super-glut of light
Cheats my seeing out of sight!

Fate hangs about endeavor
 Dull or clever;
Makes much of half a struggle,
 Plod or juggle,
So the soul of it be true,
So the whole of it be you.

Mind you not the losing
 Nor refusing;
There 's more behind the forfeit
 Than the profit;
Loss means twice another gain
In the Eminent Domain.

LOVER TO PRIEST

I

You shall not have her!
Sky may pinken out of time,
Seas churn fury into chime,
While you surprise your thrapple by a psalming of palaver,
But you shall not have her!

II

She shall not waver!
Sing in sermon, preach in song,
Send your right note rattling wrong
And I pledge you my stars the true ring of her heart shall
 save her,
For love may not waver.

III

She shall not reply,
Blind where she stands at the gate
To grope, hands up, for a mate,
Till I touch her eyes with my fire-new sight, and you may rely
On her perfect reply.

IV

Cowl shall not cow her!
She shall be truth out of reach,
Clean beyond snares which you preach,
Grip not a prayer for a crutch to thought-weaken or bow her,
Cry cripple to cow her!

v

Trick shall not bind her!
 She shall be love, which is sane,
 Not tied by a knot of her brain,
 Not to care for how you turn blood into wine to remind her
 Your chain-words could bind her.

vi

You shall not stop her!
 Never yet was truth once stopped
 Since the blue-blown heaven was propped!
 Make it a point of how to think of Christ, how prayer is proper,
 But you shall not stop her!

vii

What then shall hold her?
 Mine, not by right of thought,
 But by my right of soul, heart-wrought,
 Which gets above your thought to come to love, and that
 shall mould her,
 Just love shall hold her.

viii

You shall not have her!
 Your time is not come, but past,
 To unsoul souls, cow and gast!
 Peer sharp as an awl, look damned dumb-ague to smirk and
 glaver,
 But you shall not have her!

SUPERNITY

Κτῆμα ἐς αἰεί

BEAUTY is all there is,
 So Beauty alone survives!
Beauty is all I miss
 In this world of lives
Of great men and small men,
 As of all men
What is this worst and best
 But Beauty put to the test?

Duty begins everywhere
 And ends nowhere!
Duty is a thing to do
 Which makes the most of you;
Is a thought to take
 For another's sake,
A profit I lose,
 Yet is put to use
When I come to choose
 Between me and another,
My unfortun'd brother—
 So have an eye to duty,
The pink choice cheek of Beauty.

Love is the wing of power,
Reaches skyward every hour
Like my phyllis flower!

My love was at fearful cost,
And so I thought I lost
Because I could not see
Infinite sublimity

In the north celestial ring
Like a yellow shining wing
For forever spread
Over the lost and dead,
And so

Love lingers and I go,
Love cares never for gain,
All alike are pay and pain,
Hateful the bribe of booty—
So love is Beauty.

Thought, too, has mastered the trick,
Puts in a lick
At this evening Mars,
Counts the sputtering stars,
Pricks the unending blue
For what is true,
Fishes deep for a law
Worth living for,
Plasters the morning sky
With its aim true and high,
Soars by gyrfalcon wing,
So truth is Beauty—that I sing!

Beauty 't is to live,
To take and give,

Supernity

To come to the clinch
Nor lose an inch,
To conquer pain
And round on round
To down the ground
And rise again
To come to power,
This power in man
Of Supreme God
To cast his span
Beyond the hour,
Beyond the sod
By the truth he reaps,
By the power he keeps,
By the Heaven he sweeps
To conquer and achieve,
So Beauty 't is to live.

Beauty 't is to die
Nor breathe a sigh,
To pass away
Out of this earth
Which gave me clay
To make it worth
My while to hatch
The amber ray
So I might match
The stars at play
Which shape their light
To turn to you
The stripe of white,
The spike of blue
To jump on and on
When the clay is gone—

And so I drop my load
 When the brink is toed,
I take my leap in the dark
 By my flying spark,
I plow the spaces through
 By my pink or blue
To know, by the spark in me
 Of eternity,
To know, by the dome on high
 Of my sparkling sky,
'T is Beauty to die.

Mark but yonder cloud
 In poise over sky
Like a peacock proud
 Of the aloe dye,
Each new shape of red
 Or walnut overhead,
One keen scarlet cut
 To let the blue fire jut,
And so soon gone,
 Scattered by dark,
Shattered by dawn,
 Yet hark and mark:
'T is the cloud is gone
 Like a throttled fawn,
While each way everywhere
 Swinging free and fair,
Making the daylight rare,
 Kinging the rampant air,
Beauty forevermore is there!

Gentle Edward is gone!
 Oh, the beautiful boy!

Supernity

So great to look upon,
 Such a captain of joy,
He of the round brow
 To know why and how,
Of the perfect heart
 Above gold and art
To play masterpart
 For not a breath of fear,
For not a thought but here
 Life is noble and dear
To dare to do,
 To dare to be,
To fight it through
 To supremacy
By force of virtue-might,
 By force of mastrous right—
And he that gentle too,
 So long-hearted through
To what is fine and true,
 Kept only Beauty in view
To the flaming spit
 Just for love of it,
As now he seems to say
 From yonder where he lies
Under his whited skies:
 “I only went my brighter way,
All 'round the grave is day,
 A day you may not see
For this, that you are stuck
 In the crock and muck;
More and more is to be,
 I am one with immensity,
Any universe is small
 Matched with spirit, which is all,

And so I have gone
 To my larger dawn;
Always I go on and on
 To capture more and more
Than any future or before—
 Could God have an end in view
In endlessness, or is it true
 Nothing comes to an end but you?"

See his garden over him,
 Flowers of cheek and limb,
This ople-tree rose
 To point and pose,
Alfilerilla flowers
 To count the hours,
Spikes of larkspur to point
 Where all worlds are joint,
Tiny blue flowers to say:
 "We too are on our way,
Our way we point to you
 In the everlasting blue
We climb and fasten to,
 A blue not of future or past,
So a blue is meant to last,
 That same blue which is ours,
Beyond this sod and these hours,
 Higher and lastinger than the flowers"—

So the grasses wave
 Over his grave
Only to point the way
 He went that day.

EGOHOOD

ONCE I saw a child rule
 Who never knew he was ruling;
There was nor creed-thumbing nor schooling,
 Only it was one sun-lorded day
Where the child picked bunch-lily stems,
 Shook the dew off in a rain of sun
To see umber and white iris run
 Together like a string of gems—
Then I saw the child look up,
 As if to say, There 's more
Than Judée dew, pale madrepare
 In yonder elegant cup.
That was the certain self of the child
 Whose hand and heart were not yet moulded
To do and think just as the old did,
 So he tasselled the dew and smiled,
Now looked up, now looked down,
 Thought to himself, never a frown:
I wonder if I best stay
 To whip life out of this dew and clay,
Be as some think, do as all say,
 Or give my heart up to go
Beyond where I see and know
 Star-fields shake their worlds at you
For little briolettes of dew
 God-fashion, which is lasting-true,
Which is wholly you.

There 's the one way to be manifest,
Which a man shall be to be his best:
Mark first how the child was free,
Looked up, never bent a knee,
Yet held the tall great Heaven in fee!
One free-thoughted, free-hearted child
Who hugged to the ground the acorn-way
For sun-wash, April spray,
To reach up where the stars are piled
In one superlative mock-orange day—
Star-worlds put off so far
So I shall see how small they are
When matched with spirit, with what
Grows in the child to be bosom-thought,
Heart-bounding hope and longing,
A lip of pretty tune-time singing.
Mark how now the child never knew
God's way or your way, only their way,
Plum-buds which mount their stairway
Up the branches, capture the blue
Sky-drip, and all in spite of you!
So now, mark, the child is free,
Whole-hearted independent stuff
His soul is, more than enough
To build greatness by self-supremacy
Once he gets the chance. See now your way:
You put God up to police him,
Change his tune, clip and fleece him
Of power to swing his own thinking,
While next you have him mumbling, shrinking,
Cow-eyed, neither Ghib nor Guelf,
Fingers bent to tickle a book
For the jail in it and snivel-look,
He to forget his first royal self!

There 's the child, clear-throated free
 To be the whole what of him soulfully,
 Nor you to tinker him, boast your blunder
 To box him up, bring him under
 To knuckle down, drop his nod
 And chin, learn what is true
 To the wrong end by swallowing you,
 Play worm at it to enrapture God.

There 's the child now—he has his fair start,
 Open-minded, mammoth heart,
 While what like a child will I find
 For spirit so high-inclined
 Beyond pigging or trick of mind
 Which makes out of life what is worst,
 As to seem little, stand first?—
 Spirit such as would not stay
 But for the handicap of clay,
 Though now once put in the race
 There 's but to fight it out
 Through tug and hunger and doubt
 To mightier loftiness, nobler place.
 Once I tried to know what the child was,
 Whether an end just, or one new cause
 For power to mount new sky,
 Grow other hands and a wider eye
 And compass—there 's infinity,
 And he part of it; think you a part
 Drops out of the universal heart
 Which plays its fountains of fire
 In this one everlasting desire
 Which churns and chimes so, which longs
 For the cymbal-whisper of songs

Ear never once has heard?
So stammers the heart—why doubt its word?

The child I lost when he grew to boy,
Lost the little silver tongue,
Pretty totter, burst of joy—
Who would not keep them always young?
So there 's the man to start with,
God-seed—everything is there
Soul-first, pheasant-fair,
Which straight you begin to part with;
You head him head-first at the world,
Heart made prisoner, brain unfurled,
Shape him pretty much all head
As if such were the best of him,
While as for all the rest of him,
His God-side, half good as dead!
Never himself he 's to be, to grow,
But you just, swallow what you know,
Do not his thinking but yours,
Down before you on all fours
Dog-fashion to be mastered,
His prime high self made punk and dastard.
Once was one wise one, so they tell,
Thought to put a new better spell
To Beauty, so caught a thrush,
Carved his wing another shape,
Daubed one streak of olive-slush
Clean across his nape,
Clipped his bill, split his tongue
Till his new-made mouthpiece rung
A note 'twixt the wheeze and whistle
Of an east wind in a thistle,
Chalked his buff bosom pale,

Painted his claw, docked his tail,
Then handed you quite the common quail!

So I hold the child to what is in him,
I learn of him, he learns not of me;
I learn of him to do or to be
More than mock-parrot, mute minim;
I learn, first, to be wholly free
To do the lordliest of me
According to me, nor according to you—
You have your high self-way too,
So leave me alone to mine,
Hog-bean or orange columbine,
Since I am for what I am,
Nor shall you whip me to your shape
Of duck-foot or polygram
To mark time to you, play ape,
For there am I in the child
God-fashion, Majesty-styled
To build grape, unprison oak,
Not to be felled by your master-stroke.
My way I hold to for only my way,
There 's the one Sir Royal Highway
Of mastery which is man
By the unique whole of him,
Vast heart, vaster soul of him
For power to largen his ego-span.

Agreed, eh? Man shall not be ruled
By man-monarchy, not to be schooled
To thumb under to make his bow
To man? Agreed! Yet next what now
But up with God in his sky high
To map and master your destiny,

To leash you snug within bounds
Like a pack of hounds!
Up with your God, down with you
By so much just as he holds you to,
Raps your knuckles, pins you through
So you may come to quobbing,
Snivel-lip, psalm-sobbing,
Think him lord-high proud of you
In that you shall quiver to sing,
Whine like a mewling puppet-thing
For God's sake—the while you know
Spirit-mightiness is not so,
The loud man of you is not there
For climax superabundant fair
As bends to no mightiness anywhere.
See each tulip how it stands up
Straight as starlight, never nod,
To hold one cochineal garden-cup
Of lip up—there it whispers to God
Of triumph over Power and sod!
Once was one wise one, so is told,
Took to mastering his brave dog
That knew not a way to yield, to cog,
Yet the master thought him overbold,
So took to chiding him,
Took too to hiding him,
Muzzled him to bring him under,
Practised each prime stupid blunder
Which makes for master and slave,
Makes one plaster, t' other knave,
Till he had him so well in hand
As the sea has strips of shifting sand.
All went well enough till there came
A need of dog-soul, need of the flame

Of love, which is power to do
 All the masterfullest of you
 Without heed of profit or harm
 —There 's life at its superhuman charm—
 For one night came, the master was down,
 Smothered in the clutch and frown
 Of picaroons—each cry for help
 Died on the mask of dark—
 Came there back just the coward-yelp
 Of the hound, never growl nor bark
 As he slinked back of each pinaster,
 Tail tucked well between two legs
 Bent under him like broken pegs
 For fear—so he left his master
 Gagged and robbed of a last piaster.

O friend, God is in his sky,
 Yet only the thought is high,
 Since with him is neither high nor low,
 Only your thinking puts it so,
 By which way all highness is true
 Of you just, only of you.
 The God you seek, the power you glue
 To planets in the upper blue
 Is there in the very soul of you.
 Can you not wield it nor do
 What God does with sun and dew?
 Ah, but you could if you took
 A leaf out of his Ego-Book
 Put plain, once for all, at your hand,
 Little letters of asphodel,
 Little periods of sand,
 And you read how all is well
 With him who shall understand

Beauty makes first, is the thing that makes
Most of itself, ties a new band
Of gold leaf to each seed of sand,
Flinches never nor quakes,
Or you see by what stroke of command
This Zinfandel-vine will crawl
Across two corners of a wall
To hang the white bell there, purple ball
With only one tiny toilet hand.
Man has of him to come to this:
Nought for him was built to miss
In a universe which is soul,
He to compass not the whole
But more always, always more,
Stronger by what he was before
To grow growth, he to be
Himself just, all almightily
Himself, never part of you
To founder under your thumb and shoe.
Be storm what it may, he shall meet it:
Be there power to crush, he shall beat it;
Be evil ripemost and no odds,
He shall be foremost, stand sure
As godliness to endure,
High-handed spirit-royal pure,
Nor a side look to your Monks and Gods.
Made was man to be man first,
To beat down what hellish worst
Is of him, is about him,
Furies they that try to rout him,
War to the teeth, so that by what
He mans himself, whimpers not,
Force against force, Gods or Devils,
He stands for master of all evils

Egohood

To hold power, swallow light,
 Dip his moon-spoon into Right,
 Come to be whatmost vast he can,
 Self-kingdomed, under no ban,
 He a God at it, God the man!

 Ah, I see now by your scowl,
 You of the cassock and cowl,
 There 's God to knuckle to plumb under,
 Power put up to put me down,
 Sky-kingliness in brute frown,
 God's lightning and your thunder!
 Power there is, power is there,
 Beauty and power everywhere
 And I part of it, I to come
 To more of it—shall I only sip
 My minim of such eternal sum,
 Never once one swallow,
 Put the glass down, shut the lip,
 And I all throat and hungry hollow?
 Power is about and above,
 Power is for me that I may love
 And conquer it, never to get enough;
 Power against me for me to fight—
 How else may I come to might?
 What matter put-backs or hurts?
 "Power to him who power exerts."
 By what he puts under shall he rise
 Nearer and nearer to his skies;
 What he puts over him for power, frown,
 There 's the royalty puts him down.
 Here is one truth manifest:
 Man may not complete his best

For all of him wholly here
 In one life, as is shown
By how life littles, how he has grown
 To mightily outgrow it,
Place, power, arena-peer—
 How the stars in his spirit show it!
Higher forever he shall reach,
 Nor matters it how you teach
Weakness in him, teach him Power
 Meant him to snivel and whine and cower
Like a spoilt dog. One part of Beauty
 Is man—he blossoms out
Face to force and toughest duty,
 His close hug with death and doubt—
He has his way, yet he will come at it,
Nor counts it how you pipe and drum at it
To put him in step with you,
 With God—he has power to do,
To die, which is divine,
 And you shall not whip him into line
To look up, knuckle under,
 Whiten at your pistareen thunder.
Beauty is his, he one part of it,
 He the lasting soul and heart of it,
For see how Beauty survives
 Over change of power, loss of lives
And worlds and all I see,
 And Beauty there eternally!
His fight goes for that he shall do
 More than ever you half knew,
By his high self through and through,
 Like as the jasper-jonquil tribe
Which bends never to threat, to bribe—
 He to throw himself against Power,

Not on it, like a lemon-flower
Or chinkapin at a frost,
Bound to be Beauty at all cost,
Battleful mastiff to take and give,
To know one prince-prerogative:
As a man dies so shall he live;
As he is himself and wholly
By right to force his path
Into flower-land and aftermath
By mastership to conquer folly,
By force of loftiness which is pure,
By force of endurance which is sure
To outlast bondage, through thick or thin,
Power against power to see who shall win,
Man at his virtue and spirit-plot,
Or you at your book and altar-knot
To fasten him—love, virtue, duty
Shall put him beyond you and your kinks
Of cowardice and nasty prison-links,
He the keen throne-shine of all Beauty.

HERE 'S LUCK

HERE 's luck,
Here 's to man at his best,
Here 's to pluck
To be great and no lack of a test,
And no lack
Of a back
Or a knack
To whip up the storm and unhorse fate—
Here 's luck to the great!

To a pinch
To be man at the wheel,
To a clinch
To strike back till the bull-billows reel
Into space,
Set a pace
To the chase,
Smash a way out against reefs of wrong—
Here 's luck to the strong!

For a leap
From the bottom of thought
Into deep
New planets so all truth may be caught!
Up to flight

Here's Luck

All your might
For all height
To poise, to pick the lock of the skies—
Here's luck to the wise!

Up and true
To the end of a breath
To be you
To the last puckered palate of death,
Nor a thought
Of the what
To be got!
Highward and farward to dare to do—
Here's luck to the true!

To the brave
And he stand to his test,
Nor a grave
That shall balk him from doing his best,
Nor a fear
Of the sneer
Of a peer;
Hail to the soul that shall all unslave—
Here's luck to the brave!

To the kind,
To the man of a heart!
More than mind
Is the sweet soul performing its part;
More than thought
To be wrought
Is a jot
Of love, though all your talent unwind—
Here's luck to the kind!

Here 's to luck,
 Which is power to endure,
 Which is pluck
 To be true and kind and strong and pure
 Everyhow
 Here and now
 Foot and brow;
 Stalk and blossom of Right, which is Power—
 Here 's luck to the flower!

SING, GENTLE BIRD!

SING, gentle bird,
Your song will be heard!
Pick your way alone,
Your flight will be known!
Dip your wing
In shining dew,
The winds shall ring
At sight of you,
Your trees shall sing
At night to you
Your song they caught this day,
Your honeysuckle-lay,
Your sweet soul which shall be remembered
When these June days are Decembered.

Up to your trees
In forest air,
Up to the breeze
Which waits you there
To plunge and dip
At your honey-lip
To hurl your song
Into zenith-sky
The moon-light long,
The noon-light high,
Your melody of heart,
Your little body-part
To show us how the whole of you
Is the mellow mighty soul of you.

Have a sweep
Across the sky,
Take a leap
To fathom why
Pebbles sleep
While people die
Who only reap
A twinge and sigh,
Who only creep
Aloft to die—

Tell us the blue-handed air
Clutches Beauty everywhere,
Tell us your yonder bosom-sky
Heaves for such as creep aloft to die.

Once was a day
I tried to catch
Your cornfield lay,
Your master-match—
Did I but do
A whit as well
At song as you
My heart would well,
My world would swell
To hear me through—

There were the leaves to glisten,
There was I too to listen,
While all my cunning with all my care
Caught not one note of your sleigh-bell air.

Lonely little bird,
What a song was there,
What a note I heard
Whistling up the air

Sing, Gentle Bird!

Like a heart was stirred
 In Heaven there,
 Shouting to be heard
 In the world below,
 Just the tiny word
 For me to know:
 "Take a way to follow me,
 Other worlds are yet to see,
 Mighty climbing for mighty view,
 Hold to the power to fly in you!"

Once I thought to fly
 Taking to your wing,
 Once I fancied I
 Could rise to sing,
 Could tune my soul
 To give it birth,
 To catch your whole
 High heaven-worth
 Of joy and scope
 And mighty hope—
 Yet were you off alone
 To sweep the star-bow zone,
 And I here of my little worth
 Planting my strophes in the earth.

My lute, alas,
 My heart is numb;
 My song shall pass
 Ere June will come,
 People to say
 "His virelay
 Is dumb";
 But you shall play

Sing, Gentle Bird!

149

Immortal chime
Your perfect way,
Your heirloom to eternal time,
Strophe and trophy of raptured rhyme,
Your great heart which shall be remembered
When these June days are Decembered.

“SUCCESS” AT A BRUSH

Now for a rush to the turn—
How his eyes twist, harnesses burn
And he fetches a loop of neck
And a paw up, the near paw,
With the snort and whine of a fastened jaw
Now I take him in check!—
A rush to the turn,
Forty together to get a place
In the thick and nick of it, head the race—
A lip of foam now the molars churn
And eye whitens—then the sweep
Back to his haunches straight as a rush
Like he would take the stretch at a leap
To shorten the brush,
Then down again, one growling cough
For being checked and we are off
Like a school of porpoise in a river
Or bunch of arrows from a quiver
—A pull-back and a let-go—
Steady, boy, no break you know,
Never mind the bay one there
Who stole the start—steady,
Eye cool, pulse-beat ready
And you will down him fair and square—
Nor mind that jockey at his whip

And blood-letting, you 'll give him the slip—
 Nor the black one who thinks to beat
 By crook and cheat—
 Nor that brawler with power of lungs
 To hurricane a hundred tongues—
 Steady, boy, the quarter 's past,
 Hold to it, let slip your knees
 To down the brown one,
 The favorite whole-town-one,
 Nose ahead of him, split the breeze
 To down him, don't forget
 Your laurels and my bet—
 Now to it, at it, puff a rush,
 One speed-burst, clap your wings
 To grapple with the soul of things—
 At it, squeeze out of the crush,
 Room enough is just ahead,
 Fetch one squat and buttock-spread,
 At it or you lose the brush—
 See his hide glisten-quiver
 Like wrinkles on a squirting river!—
 Now, boy, now to it, one more burst
 Like that, one more chin-shoot out
 And—see, they are cheering, you are first,
 The rest of forty put to rout
 By force of such Titan strength
 As hurled you past the post a length—
 And as I stepped to his spall
 To pat and thank him for it all,
 Pinned a ribbon to his bridle,
 Got his nose in my arms,
 Got an apple to his lips,
 You should have seen him sidle
 To rub an eye in my palms,

Two ears put over to me like slips
Of myrtle—and I thought, could the whole
Round world or sky find more
In what will come or has gone before
Of pluck-up gentlest human soul?

QUEECHEE RIVER

WHAT an hour in what soothing sun
I have come in this afternoon
To lay me down where bloodflowers run,
Ground-robin hops his rigadoon
Snug in his river bank
While I watch him at his bobbin-prank!

Woodstock is one bundle of flowers;
Straight through runs the river
Past where such club-moss cowers
As I have seen in the forest never;
Cock's-foot grass, all finger and palm,
Wind sweet as falls from a lily-farm.

Do I not lie here and think
What all the best of it means,
Such river and its silver blink
Between two cheeks of evergreens,
That pine-finch at his fife
To share with me his picnic-life?

Do I not think what goes
To make such marvel of repose
And color in the underwood,
How all creation seemeth good,
Yet one strange thing is this:
Always is something I lack or miss?

Queechee River

So must I look ahead;
 Always I look beyond
Swamp-rose in any meadow-bed,
 Dimples in any silver pond!
Small matter how the world is fair,
 I look beyond it everywhere

Into eternity—how could I see
 Without eternity in me?
Is there room for my smallest doubt
 With all the moons in me and about?
Could I have any lack of sight
 In such avalanche of light?

So I lie looking yonder;
 I look so I scarcely see
The pretty river tumbling under
 Its bank of lazy briony,
While I bathe in my afternoon
 Which brings me so much, is gone so soon.

So as I lie looking to see
 What lies beyond the world for me,
Lo, comes Geraldine—there she came
 To the opposite bank, all the same
As the white flowers at her feet,
 Just as gentle and twice as sweet!

We talk across the stream,
 While I have this to say:
“See the bubbles how they gleam,
 These dimples how they twitch and spray
Amber-blue-beetle-like,
 And the river flies like a shooting pike!

"Yet always it stands between us,
 As if the white-eyed waters mean us
 Forever to stand apart,
 Two at hand, one at heart,
 For so we most happen to meet
 Opposite sides of our pitching street.

"Yet have you thought of it whether
 We come aught the nearer together
 By what the world trembles to miss,
 This cheek-touch or checkered kiss?
 There goes Elegance in the river;
 I may not clutch or touch it ever!

"Always I fancy you come
 Straight to the other side
 To let the river between us drum
 And whistle—there you abide,
 As if there were so much you saw
 In me not worth the crossing for!

"I 'm not tall and straight, perhaps,
 Mannered as your city chaps,
 Carry not such keen jacket-cut,
 Importance of lordly strut
 To make my bow to fashion
 Which drives the world and puts the lash on.

"Or am I too slow to speak,
 Like him I once heard telling you
 You wore spirit in each cheek,
 Eyes violet as clover dew,
 And you that slow to believe
 He wore his spirit on his sleeve?

“Or am I well up in years,
Well silvered, deliberate gait
Like one who knows he cannot be late
Or less than yonder endless spheres
To endure and to take all test,
Which is soul at its mightiest?

“Since I am older so much than you,
Am I then less than once I was?
If being man is being true
And lovemost, is there any loss?
Turns the spirit damp or cold?
Grows love in the soul a moment old?

“You may take to your sugar-bush,
You may call your birds to you
At evening when the hills are hush,
Bed your apple-bees in blue,
Tuck your heart in the upland-lush,
Yet I shall have a place there too!

“Away you may wander at will,
Beyond turnpike, weather-cock hill,
Take your place among others,
Make of them friends or brothers,
Yet you will wander back to me
As this river seeks out its mate, the sea.

“Would you put me out of your thought,
Even so I am there to last,
This verse to you for forget-me-not
Long after my day is past,
As comes the purple finch each spring
Back to you on his singing wing.

"I may be not so tall or so straight
As the other is, or I may be late;
I may forget my boon-bow too,
Or bungle in my speaking you;
But here is my song without an art,
And, oh, if you could see my heart!"

LORD LAVISH

LORD LAVISH my Lord,
By common accord!
This is Lord Lavish, I understand,
So there 's my welcome as here 's my hand!
What you look now matters not,
Your rag-bag jacket or shattered lot—
I knew you once in your up-country spot.

In your day now gone
You were looked upon
As Prince of Power by the gold you had;
Nothing you did which was good or bad;
You were gentleman straight through
All as far as anyone knew,
And the world looked up to your gold and you.

In your park were deer,
Was the chanticleer,
Wood-owl looked to pickabud-bird,
Winds in the wind-flower could be heard,
As there there grew the dapple
Orange-ball for you to grapple,
Flower and feast in your elephant-apple.

What for a palace
For bell and chalice
Of ripe high carnival topped your lawn
Like a temple of gems to look upon;

What for such untemplated art
 As caught a man by the throat and heart,
 As if soul had performed its masterpart!

You were rich and great,
 You were lord of state
 To ogle and eagle and command;
 Yet now, your lordship, here 's my hand,
 While here is a luck to you
 If you will let me say and do
 My best to put wisdom up to you:

I knew you in those days
 Under fountain-blaze
 At your palace, knew the romp and kick
 Of pastime when you took your pick
 Of pleasure to the luscious quick!
 What sweep you fetched and what way
 You flung your gold and your good away!

What a life was there
 Of aroma air,
 What hyacinths to their stalks were pinned,
 How you took not a thought for care,
 Oh, how you scattered your world to the wind
 Like the child does, sands in hand
 For not one purpose he could command!

See this corner-lot
 Of forget-me-not
 In the moon's keep, where laurels wave
 About the head of one pretty grave
 In prophet-flowers, where weep
 The grasses as the dew is deep,
 And all is quiet and perfect sleep!

This was your sweet child
Was so fine and mild
As to want only to be her most
As the starling rings or maples boast
And you had her emeralded, handcuffed so
In gold as never she grew to show
What sweetness you lost when you laid her low.

By your lie you taught:
Life is fling and sport
And no better, and nothing to do
But get her fill, any way at it
To pluck at pleasure, live for it too,
While to strive is curse, she must combat it—
There was all in her life she knew.

Your boy is here
With his crop of cheer,
Your one heir to the gold you gave
Which digs him his deep early grave;
He grew at your table of drinks
To learn how the Lunel stings and pinks—
I wonder if ever he halts and thinks!

The wife too is gone
At her early dawn
As a bird has left her nest for good
To go to her final widowhood—
You put silver to her wing,
Gave her the dappled cheek and ring,
And she your simple butterfly thing

For you to admire,
 For her doll attire
 For the toy she was for you from start,
 So she played her popinjay-part
 Of wind-moth which is so soon gone
 In the dancing flame he dances on—
 Better, say I, she were never born.

How you did ravish
 The world, Lord Lavish,
 To pick sweets out—as if I am much
 By what I snuff or gulp or touch,
 And not by the thing I do
 Which props me high, holds me true
 'Til I come to yonder circle of blue!

Let a man go wrong,
 Be he weak or strong,
 He shall pay full for it—there 's one law
 Beauty goes by to blossom for
 More beyond and out of view,
 More than ever men dreamed or knew,
 More power to be evermore mounting to.

Your hand, old friend,
 For life to one end!
 Man is young in the world, I have said,
 Is forced to learn by the sharp tough tread
 Of circumstance to grow great,
 To climb over all of ugly fate
 To be his own God and Potentate.

So give me your hand,
 Take the tall new stand!
Since your way in the world was lavish-bad,
 So have you lost all the world you had—
Never mind, have at it again!
 His song returns to each moulted wren,
And always the chance for men to be men.

VILLAGE FOOL

I

I KNEW a fool once,
Crab-apple head,
Village butt and dunce,
Wit as well as dead,
Such uncommon curious man
He never looked to you,
His hat like a paper can,
One foot in a paper shoe,
Walked backwards because he was worsed,
Because his luck had been reversed,
His right hand over his heart
As if to shield it in part,
For fear, maybe, you should strike him,
Or the village-girl should like him;
Knew his neighbors and friends,
Understood their aims and ends,
Had a wisdom of his own,
Never a full hand,
As if his soul had flown
Leaving him only crumbs
Of skylight to understand,
His grip just of knuckles and thumbs.
Who he was, whence he came
None knew—always the same

Village Fool

Faceful of kindness which endears,
His look half smileful, half tears,
Yet one wondered how he could come
To be so soul-spoken, yet dumb.

II

Maybe he wore two souls in him,
One a bright soul, the other dim,
Each a separate soul—who knows?
Leastwise so my story goes
To show he was no less a wonder
Than you who never made a blunder;
For mark, there was this about him
Made you take a breath to doubt him
If he were wholly such a fool
As you would think by his bonnetful
Of rubbishness he would talk,
His paper shoe, backward walk—
There was this odd circumstance:
Once he came to fix his glance
On a single star in the sky,
He could not look apart from the spot
If he wanted to or not,
Nor could he answer you why
He was so fastened, why he stood
Hours together to look so far
To another world, one tiny star.
What he thought or understood
One could not guess—only this
One mystic mighty wonder is:
He would come to another mood
So soon as his gaze was fixed,
One new self, another man,

More wonderfully subtle than
Men reach in their meridian—
Two selves he was could not be mixed,
So as it seemed to you
He was his second self, all new,
As if as soon as his first was tied
To a star so he could not move,
His second soul became god and guide
To show to you and to prove
You may not ever compass the whole
Of what defies all limits—man's soul.
For look now what he could be,
Once his other self was put free
To think and talk and feel and see:
He saw more than other men saw,
Knew more than other men knew,
Was not whipped about by law
Compelling what he should think, should do,
But was native grace, natural-true,
Nearer to Beauty was he too
Than you who are only human you.

III

Men saw him now at his best!
He was out of the world, I would say,
Yet of it, the same dew and clay,
All the vast man manifest
For so much more he could see to do
Than when he was buttonholed to you,
As if by looking away so far
He had been buttonholed by a star!

IV

He knew the now,
Knew too the past,
Saw the whole how
Your life was cast;
When men were born,
What they had done
From night 'til morn
The long ripe run
Their steps had gone
Below the sun.
He saw your thought,
Each minim-wish,
If honest-wrought
Or devilish,
All as if he
Composed new might
By which to flee
To any height,
By which to be
All spirit-flight,
More than I see
By candle-sight,
More than my law
I worship so
Is working for,
Could ever grow.
Wonders he told
Of what he saw
In blue and gold
Superior
To what men know
Of what they see,

Just undertow
 Of eternity.
 His heart was free,
 Soul was high,
 Infinity
 About him nigh,
 Divinity
 To fill his eye,
 While what he was
 Which I could know,
 Or what the cause
 Should change him so,
 I could not tell
 More than could he,
 Such wonder-spell
 Like deity.

v

Of this one evening I am to tell!
 Such lavender-breath swept the village,
 As if the air now begun to pillage
 Apricot-flower and zinfandel—
 Men stood to watch a red last lip
 The sun put up ere he took his dip—
 One cloud belched one blue fire
 Into forests underneath
 'Til I would think my Heaven was nigher
 Than men dream or prophets breathe—
 Bees grew rich at their honey-knack,
 Each wind pursued its apple-track—
 Wonder came now and everywhere,
 For spirit was in bush and air.

Village Fool

At this hour our fool would come out,
 Shuffle backward, go gaping about
Or above him so he might find
 A star to capture his cripple-mind
So the other fine high soul of him
 Might come forth, capture the whole of him.
Bill-bubble was most his talk,
 A throat of only windy pith
Men could nowise reason with,
 While there he would shoot and balk,
Looking as if he annoyed you,
 Meaning only to avoid you.
Fireflies sparked in air,
 Captured his hungry stare
Like stars, then left him there
 To wonder how a star could fly,
Could wink out so, could multiply.
 Stood he there to study them,
Each fly like a lighted gem
 Dancing in a diadem,
When—what should face to face with him
 In the new blue evening dim
But two bright eyes, those other stars
 Which give their deeper look than Mars
Or Procyon, eyes which I see
 Look more than bone or blood could be,
Two volumes of eternity
 To hold him, to fasten his look
To such new open Beauty-book
 As never he saw before
For cheeks of sun-spirit pink,
 Lips of island madrepoire
Would closet a man to listen more
 Than song of wren or bobolink.

There he was fastened, nor could move
More than if his star had held him,
Or his heaven of worlds compelled him—
A thing which answers to prove
One soul in a man may be captured,
Held fast by being wholly raptured,
By which way his mightier self is freed
To be more than men could comprehend,
To know the value of life is its need
For struggle to 'complish an end,
For wisdom to find the true value
Of "shall," of "shall not" or just "shall you,"
To know and see so much more
Than men took thought or dream of before.
She too, riveted by his gaze,
Now for first time saw in his eyes
New other wonderful ways
Soul has to be vastly wise,
Saw his deep heart-look which came now,
Such kingliness across his brow
To take her by monstrous surprise,
Such a new man was he, foot to head,
As if he rose to her from the dead.

VI

There they were standing face to face,
She beautiful as young girl grace
Looking into his new other spirit
Half to love, half to fear it.
Now the breath of her came quick,
Heart leaping, thought thick
To think of him as he was once,
Only village butt and dunce,

Village Fool

To think of him as he was now,
 Of spirit eye, Godward brow,
Yet no knowing why or how
 He could be changed that instantly,
Not a cause for it she could see
 Save soon as he looked in her eyes
Came there the soul in him longs and sighs,
 Is man-like, is mammoth-wise
As men are never below the skies.

VII

With nought above him
 In all her skies,
Only to look in his eyes
 Was to love him—
Only to know him
 As he was now
Of soul-shapen brow,
 What girl could forego him
To think of him now
 As he came to her there
With his new fine face,
 His gentlemost care,
His summer-tree grace
 To tell her his heart
Which came to him then,
 The noblest best part
There is of men,
 Now she harkened to catch
His fine first word
 No Pindar may match
Nor planet has heard
 As he watched her lips

Like a bee 'round a pink
 Will hover to think
Before he dips,
 As if loth to lose sight
Of such Beauty by dipping
 For one tiny bite,
For just honey-sipping!
 His way he spoke
She had never heard,
 'Til her heart was stirred
Like a plum-leaf purred
 If a robin woke:

VIII

"I am the man I was once,
Not your village butt and dunce—
I am the man I was then
When the world had blossomed men
To be great as truth again;
I am the man I once was
When the world had noble cause,
Knew no need of whips and laws—
I am myself—look to see
What my sovereign self may be,
Once the yoke is off, foot free!
Know I now I lived before
In another world away—
Once I saw you on a shore
Looked against a purple bay,
Flowers of fire were on the air,
Children rang a song to say
Power is Beauty everywhere,
Power in Beauty come to stay!

Village Fool

You were young, I too was young—
Little people know a thing
Mightier than your reasoning,
Loftier than lip and tongue—
So we knew we both were made
Each to have the other, knew
Love must be an even trade
To be quits and worth while too—
We were in one sunbeam birch,
Pretty jasper light for leaves,
Each was in a climbing perch
Puts up fingers and achieves—
Such the Beauty was about,
Little sparks of souls at play
Mocked a tulip for its pout,
Found a new unworldly way
Now to take a crimson track,
Now to seize a flying sun,
Never stepped an atom back
Since the soul of them begun—
Souls were singing—we could hear
Such a melody of sky
As star-spots look, high and clear
And always, tuned to never die—
I remember now I saw
Such a boy-face, so complete,
Truly so surpassing sweet
There was no accounting for
The Beauty in him—each look
Made one volume like a book
Men could never understand,
Such flood of soul was in it,
Such eye-look of the linnet,
Such his handsome hair and hand,

And all new, wholly other
Than any human brother
I saw ever, I would say
Such fine spirit-wonder play
Could not blossom through the clay,
Such his manliness, so fair,
Above handsome hand or hair
Or look of him, I could see
One triumph of Divinity—
Beauty was to do your best,
Beauty was to conquer wrong,
Men were put to every test
Just to mould them high and strong
To look beyond, they to see
More than Self or any Hope
Save only this, to do, to be
Their most—men were made to grope
By darkness to know of light,
By falling to know of flight,
By wing-work to know of might.

IX

“We were in our tree above,
Stems of wisdom filled the air,
Yet we talked of only love,
Love was all things everywhere,
Just our love—we fancied truth
Was a thing of love and youth,
Took life for a rattling toy,
A trick to manufacture joy,
We just giggling girl and boy.
Grew our tree up such a tree,
Fine as fingers of a sun,

Bore us up too, you and me,
As if everything were done
All for our satiety—
Grew the branches fine and high,
Thin as threads of onyx light
'Til they lost their elbow-might,
Vanished into perfect sky—
Left were we to drop or fly!
Learned we never once one stroke
Meant to rise or plow the wind,
So as now the branches thinned
And vanished, or bent and broke,
We were dropped—so much was all!
Dropped, so that way came our fall
To earth, to this solid plain
Now to strive to rise again.
Once we summered among elves,
Where soul soars, Beauty delves,
Yet thought only of ourselves,
Looked never once around,
Knew nothing above ground,
Held only to our love,
Youth was joy, joy was enough
For us two to be thinking of!—
And now this solidest plain,
We to try to climb again

x

“To grow to each other by nobler ways—
What long way off, what heavy days
Ere cheek to cheek again, lip to lip,
We shall have learned how selfless duty

Is the apple-branch of Beauty
To come before our honey-dip!"

XI

So spake he to her, the strong man bright,
His fool-self kept out of sight
By looking her full in the eyes
Where soul builds Beauty otherwise
Than I see in a lip or hand,
Beauty which is out of reach,
Beauty which is out of speech,
Yet volumes I understand,
Beauty and none like it so
Beyond what I may touch, may know,
And he so fastened to it there,
A thing beyond him to call him forth,
The gem in him, all his spirit-worth,
He was no longer village-fool,
But man-mighty, one bosomful
Of wisdom and power and love
'Til—you know man gets never enough—
He must have pastime at her lips,
At her white warm neck and shoulder
By which he meant to clasp and hold her—
Why should those lips grow blossom-red
If not for him to feed upon?
What is this life, now all is said,
More than a kiss and we are gone?
She too so grew drawn to him
Through the blue new evening's rim,
She too—what woman shakes
Her No back when the red heart wakes?—
For sooner than either could speak

Village Fool

They were together, cheek on cheek,
 He at her neck and underlip
 As sun ties to a clover-slip—
 One embrace of sun and clover,
 One rush and all was over,
 For that one moment he lost sight
 Of her eyes, of the spirit-light
 Which came of her wonderful eyes,
 Not to be known of otherwise,
 When quicker than eye could see
 Back shot his fool-stupidity,
 Back he was at his paper shoe
 To stroke it, talk crow-talk too,
 Back backward, hand on his heart,
 And so he played his thimbleful part,
 Auk-awkward dotterel among men—
 There was her poor fool again!

XII

Beauty comes first—look to that
 Which all worlds go aiming at!
 Beauty is power, you to see
 How this soul is meant to be
 Part of all God's sublimity!
 Girl and boy were they, these two:
 Only of themselves they thought,
 Not once of the rounded blue,
 Not of what is lordly true
 Or vastwise in Majesty wrought,
 Only of each other fond,
 Looking never farther to see

How Best is always beyond,
 How soul is only put in bond,
 Partner of Eternity.
 He must work his fool-way out,
 Come to truth by way of doubt,
 Learn how soul comes more and more
 Past what is or went before,
 Gets Godward by taking wing
 Above all human narrowing.
 Other worlds and other ways
 Wait for men—there are such days
 As shall satisfy all phase
 Of noblemost thought or hope,
 To which I stumble and you grope,
 Fools first that we may come wise,
 Little loftier than flies
 At start—life tricks and tries
 The very soul of a man
 To put him to his best he can,
 Each purpose such long way off,
 One world never world enough
 To fill this soul or wake it
 To what the heart would make it—
 Ev'n so they two must wait
 To come to such perfect state
 Of love, which is love of all,
 Love above what is self, is small,
 Each one put to mighty test
 To bring him to mighty best,
 Many lives to paddle through
 To get a single soulful of you.
 Better you wait—not too fast!
 Try to have another look
 Wider than your peek-hole nook—

Village Fool

Eternity is never past,
The soul of things is meant to last.

Life bubbles and puffs and pants,
Heart rushes above circumstance—
Did you think life was your only chance?

BEN TOTAL

GRASP the supernal hour,
 Take life by a clinch,
Gather, my friend, your power
 Nor lose you an inch
Of any way to seize
 The inborn gem of you, like these
Red poppies hold to their red
 Nor take that poke-leaf color instead.

Ben Total I shall tell you of,
 High Ben, as he was known
For his way his hat would doff,
 His chin-weed whittled to a cone
To point you always to his toes,
 The choice end of him, you would suppose,
By his new boot copper glow,
 By his strut he took to go,
By the puff he blew to show.

One thing he thought to be—
 Himself just—so much to his credit!
Never he looked to a man to see
 His gizzard, or the way he fed it,
But always his own way he took
 To perch, crow, flap, shine, spit, and look,

By which, and think as you may,
 He took his own tune and way
Of playing, and said his say.

What a power is this
 That a man shall be
What is wholly his,
 Catch divinity,
Power to perch alone
 Like the silver star
In a purple throne
 Where his sunfields are,
His high self to show
 As God made him, so
Never to crawl to come
 Under your heel and thumb
While the world 's a stair,
 While the truth is fair,
While the stars are there!

Yet was his thought, Ben's thought, I have said,
 Bent more on his boots than on his soul,
How he should carry his top feather red
 To come to distinction of nowl,
Twist two tie-bows in his shirt
 To give one diamond the proper squirt
Of fire, for that way he might
 Play globbird, one speck of light
So he should be wholly kept in sight.

One so small side of Ben was this:
 He liked to see the people take
His says and ways, copy his
 New noon-walk, his elbow-shake,

Use him as men use a map
For the dots on it and breadth of lap,
While so he was pleased to see
Men, his neighbors, come to be
Talking walking just as he.

Soon it came about for fact
Men, his neighbors, nothing lacked
But they were Ben in boot and hat
And waddle and corner-chat,
Ben all over for looking at!
His way always men would come,
Watch the twiddle of his thumb,
Envy such duodenum!

One day came a thought to marry,
Took hard hold of him in truth,
Nor was reason he should tarry,
Being well on past his youth—
Just the thought to take a wife,
To chance it for luck and life!
Was he not of such renown
To be copied up and down,
Set the go-gait of a town?

Was he not now all there was
Left of a man in that one place,
All men like him in cut and clause,
Neither inkling left nor trace
Of one man in the village then
But he was, crop and fling of him, Ben?
All men like him, pelt and limb,
So count it not an idle whim
They were only part of him,

Ben Total

Ben Total, for so they named him when
None could tell him from other men!
One girl fair in the village grew
Above others, gentle and true,
Whom he loved, and the upshot this:
He meant, if he could, to make her his
With her wealth of wrinkled hair,
Volume-eyes, such spirit there,
April heart without a care!

So said he to her: "See how I
Put the fashion for other men,
Each one draws my pipe and sigh,
Takes my skew and regimen,
So look among them and pretty plain
You see me over and over again,
To prove, and I show you true,
Just by this one thing I do,
I 'm the only man for you!"

"Not so, Ben," she said, "you are slow,
Not at the head of men, for see
They take your way and say, and so
Another would do as well for me!
Men you have moulded to one thought,
This thing to do, that thing not,
So now have a look to see
What the full harvest shall be:
All men all the same to me!

"Different are all men, God knows,
Each man meant to blow his flower
Of handsome heart, lordly pose
For high standing and perfect power!

You bend men so they come to do,
 To think and twist and squat like you,
Nor greatness is it, will not draw
 Each to what God meant him for,
Clean beyond your tooth and claw,

“Each to grow wholly unique each,
 Little like as yonder peach
Apes my Brandywine pear
 Which swings such tassels in air,
Each to come to his own true power
 As a ledge will or little flower,
Never once to turn to you,
 Take the toe-shape of your shoe,
Swallow you down like a pigeon-stew!

“Much is each man meant to show,
 Find his own way to color-glow,
You not to shape him by your force
 To take your pitch as matter of course!
Teach him your trick of striking, reaching,
 And, lo, a man is lost in the teaching—
But you just to let him sing
 His own note, dip his wing
His own angle, make him king!

“What a world it shall be, forsooth,
 Such a bundleful of truth,
Should all men think as one man thinks,
 We all huddled in one hopper
Like a game of tiddledywinks,
 Chopped to sameness by one chopper!
Have a way to think and do
 What is wholly highly you,
Help a neighbor to it too!

“Help a brother be himself,
All his best he is by birth,
Nor you to stand him on your shelf
For mirror to show your worth
Of cuticle and thought and hobble,
How he took your twitch and bobble!
Greatness is it not to grind
Men to take your cue or blind,
Swallow down your cut of mind.

“So my obstacle is this:
Now are all our village beaus
So like you by analysis
I should be puzzled, God knows,
Right as I look from brother to brother,
To pick one lover from another!
Awkward, eh, yet true-stated,
Not to know how he is rated,
Know my mate when I am mated!”

COME, COME AWAY!

SWEET as purple in a lilac's breast,
 There she was by the pear-wall wing
Of her cottage, there at her best;
 There her quail was gardening,
There the sigh was fine
 In her loblolly pine,
There the sun was ripe
 In each bon-field stripe.

Come, come away
 While the hills are red
In sunrise-play,
 While the soul is wed
To such dressed-up day!
 To the silver top
Of mountains in air,
 Nor thought to stop,
Nor thought for care,
 Or let us away
To our cedar swamp
 For a day to play
And a heart to romp
 As the crake is gay
In his slick and pomp!

Come, Come Away !

The longspur shall fling
His song in air
As his lifted wing
And his swoop are there
To give us his soul
In a caracole
Of flash and circle and pitch,
Like a falling star
Out of bottomless far,
To land at his pickerel ditch.

Come, come away
For a look to-day,
For a leap of play!
To-morrow will come,
Have its maple-hum,
Beetle-drum,
Plash of the lapwing-leap
In his apple-field heap
And we shall be gone!
Only days are here,
Soul is on and on,
Yet the days are dear;
Cock an ear to hark
To the floating lark
Ere night be on,
Ere we be gone!

April again
At the window-pane
With its tune of rain;
My cloud to dip
Where the sun will rise,
Get the scarlet lip

And olive eyes,
 Get a foot to skip
And a wing to rise,
 All of April rare,
All a heart to share,
 And we shall be there!

More soul is outside
 Than this soul I hide
In thought underneath,
 Just as more breath to breathe
Than this breath I share
 Makes the globe of air
Which is not part of me,
 Nor self nor heart of me,
This soul which I keep
 Though the winds may reap,
Though the breath may sleep.

Is the foot-path rough
 As the fight I give,
Yet never enough
 Is this fight to live,
This force against force
 To make for what,
In the natural course,
 But power which is wrought
Of the kick and blow,
 And whether or no
I like it or not,
 This fight to be fought,
This soul to be wrought?

Come, Come Away !

Do I not see
 The blue round heaven
Is spark and leven
 To you and me,
Is bonneted blue
 To yellowness through,
And all round us too,
 Round us everywhere,
And we caught for fair
 In the tree-green net
For all eons set
 In blood-red and jet?

Does life mean care,
 Mean one struggle through
To what is fair,
 What is great and true
For me and you
 To be climbing to,
Then is this earth
 All the struggle worth,
Then is my sky
 But the other I,
Then is my hour
 But the seat of power
To hold to my clinch
 To the crowded inch.

Both you and I
 Have a way to go,
And whether or no
 I joy or sigh,
There 's a point in view
 Beyond what I do,

There 's an end in sight
 Beyond human light,
So I see my way
 By the finer ray,
I reach to all light
 By my coil of height,
And the winds may reap,
 And the clouds may weep,
And the dead may sleep.

We shall lie together
 In the sod out there
While the sparrow's feather
 Dominates the air,
And to-morrow's weather
 Is his sport and fare;
Comes it then, that he,
 By his wing and glee,
By the sun he blinks,
 By the storm he drinks
Counts more than we
 When we drop our feather,
When we lie together
 In the sod and weather?

Come, come away,
 All is eternal day,
All round us the planets play,
 The cobby trumps his true
New glee to you
 Ballooning in the wind
Where his cloud is thinned,
 Where his heart is pinned!

Come, Come Away !

While the grasses play
In a yellow day,
Everyway, everywhere
All which is best is fair,
Life is all a conquered care,
All is to do and dare,
And we shall be there!

MY XENIUM

Oh, yes, I took him in,
You let him pass!
You thought him no more than a temple of sin
Or a lick of grass,
So you left him to the gutter
To choke and sputter.

The poor devil was rough,
Had wriggled enough,
Looted pockets or what not,
Played junket and sot,
Played the fool
By playing knave, thought wrong could rule.

Hold you kind to him all the same!
God made him!
Once he had a youth and a name
And they stayed him!
He might have found better to do
Had he found better in you.

See there now up the road
His critics bunched like a toad
In some waterless land,
Only thirst at their command,
Thirst to see him go under,
Thirst to shout their mouth of wonder!

My Xenium

I knew him since he begun
His verminous run,
How he hungered to lampoon and loot
Like an ugly brute,
Took the wayward way and unfirm,
Took the twist of a worm.

Never he knew there 's a law of things
Carries kicks and stings,
Carries the almighty bite
Day and night;
Never he knew
Beauty is not to be smashed askew

And nought to pay!
Hellishness may have its day
So as the honey-fly drives his sting
And dies for having done the thing;
Never he knew
Triumphancy is kind and true.

Was he not taught
Life is a game to play
For all there is to be got,
For little there is to pay?
Did you not example him that
By how you captured your gold and fat?

Did he not learn of you
How, what wrong soever he should do,
What venomous ugly thing he should scheme
In his drunken dream,
Let him to any deep descend,
There 's a Savior there at his elbow-end?

I am telling him this:
 Whine as you will,
 Or trump the tune of a robin's bill,
 Fact of it is
 Life is for cuts and fits,
 Is a game of quits,

So you shall do
 The thing by you to be done
 Which is clean and true,
 Or reap the subsequences, my son!
 Take my word to the hammer's ring,
 Performance is King!

Whimper and knuckle to God,
 Or dance your pie-fly dance above sod,
 There 's all power for you to choose,
 There 's all power for you to lose,
 Your chance to knock under or command,
 And no Savior at hand.

What I think luck makes only one law
 Of Beauty which things go striving for,
 Power by the genius of virtue,
 Never God to help or hurt you,
 Just the royalty of high behavior,
 Man his own God and only Savior.

I found him at night;
 Where he lay his lips were white
 As the foam-end lip of a wave
 And he lay waiting for the grave;
 Give me your hand, I said,
 Let go of the dead!

My Xenium

Be man at it through
 To the hell-fire blue,
To a wink of you!
 What is there to be found
In the universe around
 Like a conqueror of the ground?

Be the God in you
 To dare to do;
Look the God in you to see,
 To dare to be;
Glory be yours from your first
 To conquer the worst!

Have a go to it straight
 To be kingsomely great;
To know, by what God-work you do,
 Comes power unto you;
To see, by the light I fling,
 Man is born to be king!

I smoothed his brow out,
 I gave him bread,
I swaddled his gout,
 I bolstered his head,
I brought the melon to his lip,
 I brought the flower-bird to ring and dip;

I patted him on the back:
 "Your hand, old friend!
Never you drop for lack
 Of peak to fly to or noble end!
Your hand to the last ditch too;
 Fast am I in this fight with you!"

So I took him to heart,
 Gave him a start;
You should have seen him unbend
 Like a friend to a friend,
Seen what great soul of a look,
 One open Paradise-book

He gave me, worth more than you claim
 For gold or a Parliament name!
I took him in,
 You let him pass;
Man is more than a temple of sin,
 Or a lick of grass!

ON THE RHINE

I

You know how a boy thinks,
Clean keen-hearted between the winks—
This boy I know walked along the Rhine,
Saw the waves pearl and pebbles shine—
Who could think what he was thinking of
As he went along at a blunderbuss hitch
With small knowledge, yet he kept on thinking
What the world was, what most of it meant
In the wind-up, what life was about—
Would he be here long or be mustered out
Ere his time should come to know and doubt?

II

There he was—his soul in him
Knew not one way to speckle
More than his moon-cheek knew a freckle—
Spirit-most, while each spirit-whim
Took never a thought of himself
To lick his chops, mix God and pelf—
Never was taught to beg,
Never was taught to kneel,
Man at it leg and leg,
Man at it head and heel

To be all that was true
 Of himself as he knew
 He was meant to be free
 As a finch at his glee
 To soar highest to do
 All his best to be true,
 Nor a fillip from you.

III

You know how his soul was white
 As a first lap of sunrise-light
 As he thought, Could he keep it so
 In the post-pink of blood-vessel glow
 To come after—there was life
 Ahead of him for pit and strife—
 Large ways or small ways,
 The fight is there always—
 What could it all mean,
 One fat, the other lean,
 Strange mixture of bubble and sigh,
 All men living so they may die!
 On he went thinking so,
 Only this one wish he had,
 To mantle to be of use
 Somehow, anyhow in the world,
 So much there was to be done,
 So much was wrong and strong—
 There was his mighty wish,
 To be of use in the world somehow,
 As he headed on towards the Coblenz Mart,
 Longing to do his manfullest part,
 And the wish came from his boyhood heart.

IV

Bonn-College was where he was taught
To be so much which he was not—
 Taught how to think your way,
 Taught to knuckle and trim,
 Taught to wheedle and pray,
 Taught to capture your whim,
 Take the thing you should say
 For whole truth, verbatim,
 Nor a look to essay
 To know what was in him,
 But in you, as if you
 Had the key and the clue
 To his heart, and you knew
 What was true of him too.
There in your college he went fishing—
 Most he got was your hishing-pishing
To keep him wishing ever and wishing
 To show you himself for what he was
And none of your chop-eye or lop-off laws.

V

Poppelsdorf Allée is in Bonn—
What a chorus of trinket-trees
 To whistle in an afternoon breeze
While I walk on and on,
 Each true tree like another friend,
And I think their welcome will never end!
 In where the sun was squeezing between
Two tree-trunks, there could be seen
 My young man, nowise daunted,
Looking, i' faith, as if he were haunted

By a new spirit—there she came,
 Such a sweet girl to speak him fair
 As any angel, joined him there
 Between the trees—just her name,
 Fraulein, was all he knew,
 Save her eyes, which were perfect blue,
 Noble-kindly to noblest true:

VI

“Take a word from me,
 I ’m young, you see,
 But I have my own way of certainly knowing!
 Have a look to me,
 They are young, you see,
 Who are never too old to be growing!

“There ’s a song to spell
 Of the philomel
 Now he tickles his tree into perfect ringing;
 How he leaps and lutes
 And the piemag flutes
 And the wind in the west is singing!

“What a way he has
 In his bristle-grass
 Of getting the best of all kinds of weathers
 By plucking the cold,
 By tucking the gold
 And green in his forest of feathers,

“Nor a cage for him,
 Only bough and limb

On the Rhine

For a leap and the top-end best of his singing,
All a heart to give,
All a soul to live
For longing and singing and longing.

“So much were not true
Of the soul of you
And you perch in your college-cage to be learning
How Æschylus sings,
Euripides rings,
Or the wind in the west is yearning.

“For they keep you there
Under club and care,
Shut heart in so only skull may be bulging,
Nor a heart to give,
Nor a soul to live—
There's a thought worth your while indulging!

“More noble that you
Be the you of you,
Be the God of you for greatening and growing
Than you lick their feet
To be mostly meet—
Who would turn a whole soul into knowing?

“Go back to the bird
And his song you heard,
His tree-leap, his chorus for flight of a morning
To know he is free
As light is to flee—
Build your nest in your yonder dawning!

VII

“Take to loving the flowers
For their pretty ways;
Learn to love the hours
More than the days!
Only a maiden I,
Just learning to sigh,
Just coming of age,
All title-page!
Never I knew why
I stop to sigh;
Never I knew enough
To question love,
Only to play my part,
The leaping heart,
Only to love—
There 's purpose enough!
New grass for growth,
New buds for blowth,
And I love them both—
I love the winds to bristle,
To stoop to tune each thistle
To chirp and whistle—
A summer squall
Of fire and ball
And I love them all—
I love the leaves to deaden,
For then my grapes shall redden—
Over all and above
I choose to love
Rather than I know
Why love is so,
Rather than I think

On the Rhine

Of my meadowink
Beyond that he is fair
As a summer sky
To float above his care
To live, his fear to die,
So he may pipe his song
The short day long,
So he may tune his soul
To the rounded whole"—

VIII

When—now like a packet of charms
 She was caught in his arms—
Now as a sun-morning dips
 He was there at her lips,
Looking for room in her eyes
 For his image to hide
From his world outside,
 From a world which is wise—
Down deep in her eyes
 His image to hide,
Away from tree-leaf or heather,
 Away from his college of thought
Where love is not,
 Never to question whether
Or no or what—
 Deep in her eyes inside
His image to hide,
 Farmost from book-leaf or heather,
Where souls hide hearts together.

NONCONFORMIST

I

BE that, just that,
 You and you,
The thing in life worth coming at,
 To be forceful true
To the unique type of God in you!
 Have a look
At lily or gentianella-book:
 Each flower
Captures its own plump cheek and power
 By itself, never to copy
 Clove or poppy—
Each yellow sun-glass hour
 Remains the same
 In streak and flame,
While I marvel at the frame
 And purple of the pheasant-flower;
You to your own way
 Of difference from the other,
Your independent master-brother,
 To give play
Each to his own sun-angle ray.
 Power is there, truly that,
But Power for you to be striking at,

Worlds to be overcome
 Ere they strike you dumb.
 What value 's this
 That I stoop and drule
 To snuggle to some conqueror-school
 And I my own man-majesty miss?
 Difference is everywhere
 In plum, grass-path, panting air,
 In man,
 In ballading shrike,
 And no two tempered to ring alike.
 Look that you think or do
 What is foremost new, wholly true
 To show the pluck and ear-mark of you!
 One stands stronger than another,
 His whining brother—
 There 's the weaker one's new lesson
 To pluck up gizzard and to press on—
 One puts up his pallor-blue;
 Look that you
 Take carrotty-red
 Or crock instead
 So you shall be native you—
 One thinks his endless God
 Flattered by whining psalm and nod:
 Look that you
 Have more of native true
 God-royal for the man in you!
 What of the upshot, or what the odds
 Since Ye are Gods?
 Your lake goes lilied, your garden rosed,
 Yet no atom is composed;
 Life, circumstance, form
 Pitted against the storm;

Endless agitation
From child to nation;
Little comes of ease,
And very truly there is no peace.
Comes one certain reasoning:
Each very thing I am after,
Ground-fat, palace-rafter,
Gulletful of chuck and laughter
Make not the thing
The triumphant forces bring
To put me to my struggling,
But other finer far-off game,
Not once the same,
My shots at tempestuous frown
Till the falcon world shall be brought down.
Is there not proof
The finest great best lies aloof,
Elegance for me to match,
Not to catch,
Power for me to acquire,
Nor only admire,
Dominion for me to soar,
Not to implore,
Forces for me to snuff out,
Never fear nor pout—
One fine divine opposition-plan
To force me to be man?—
I for high choice championship,
Never the whimpering coward-lip!

II

See again how the best in you
Fights against all you hope or knew:

There 's the thrush,
Just his tiny throat
For one clear new note,
Then evening comes and his eyeless hush!
You would have him sing
To no end of his pretty gurgle-ring.
There 's my sonnet-bird
At his fine last word:
His best he would give,
Half anthem, half sigh
Because he must die
That the hawk may live.
There man fades to die away,
There his trap-rock means to stay!
There your strongest survives
Out of noble lives—
How often the best must go,
While who is there lives and loves it so?—
To prove me I come to more
Than what is gone before,
Than what I see around
In sky or ground
Which I have outgrown,
Basket-treasure, chipmunk-throne
Of grub-royal earth, to aspire
To other living, vast-ways higher,
Else what is this in man
Outruns his utmost plan,
Outleaps life or all he may do
Of fine longing, purpose true,
Till so he droops and dies
And this world never satisfies?
By opposition so will man
Discover his soulful span

Of king-independent-self,
Nor meant for you or your closet-shelf,
But all for his own supremest true
Against supremest odds,
Not to be dominated by you
Or circumstance or Gods!
So he shall not conform
To temple-trick or chancel-storm
Or you,
Himself just for foremost true
As God put him,
You to not graft him nor uproot him.

III

Came one moon-like night,
Every little star stood bright
As eyes
Full of young wonderful surprise
As there stood my love and I
In our hazel-bough patch,
Yellow foxglove was there to catch,
One bobwhite-whistle next by
In the soft song of the trees,
While we
Lingered to hearken, to see
How truly man is part of these
His whistling butterfly-birds and trees
When—Now it was time to tell
How love went, to break the spell
Of our evening wing and bell—
Just one word,
And, oh, how soul is heard
And captured and understood

Like my bell-bird is in his hazel-wood—
 Just one word was all

Lip could master now I let fall
 My heart to her, lip and love and all
 My soul in her open palms,
 We there fast in each other's arms
 For love only, never the thought

How love is wrought,

Or why

Soul speaks only by a sigh,

When—"Now we must be one,

"We two," she said, in her pretty way
 To win me by lip and dimple-play—

"All things under the sun

Seek each other to be lastly one

So the will of the kingdom of love be done—

I to take your way or you mine,

One unity which is divine,

Never again as before,

Each for that self-masterful poise

Only tree-peak or hill-peak enjoys,

But one soul between us more and more,

Not to question why once or whether

Two souls like ours should come together."

"Ah," I said, "that is Nature's gait,

To join, submit, imitate,

You small, Nature great

That has brought you to her terms,

Pig-uncle play-way of the worms!

Two to be one

For soul and purpose and creed,

Then the duty of life is done,

Man is to love, to eat and breed,

What else goes there under the sun

More than this that soul shall need?

Hark, there 's my maple-top lark

Full of his lifted song,

His mottled orange mark,

Dipping, for love of grace,

His short life long,

Careless, so he pipe his song,

How death grins him in the face!

He would have his ballad to last,

The while he thinks it this life is past

Right as he whistles his best and last,

To prove there is other better

Than life which frees him of his fetter.

Since the world holds nothing new

But soul in its each cut and hue,

Foremost is to be true

Incomparably you;

Each the self-independent each,

Each from the other out of reach,

We two to be two, not once one,

That way to count for more

On differentiated shore

Of sun and sun.

What 's life, from heel to nowl,

Save that man, tree-like, shall grow

His ego-kingful soul

To shape and blossom so

His way, his new caprichio,

And not a pinch of your thumb and toe?

I 'm to be I,

And not a sigh

For what I seem to have missed,

Since Power is there for me to resist,

I to be man at it 'though I die.

Nonconformist

Therefore will I not conform
 To priest or norm,
Now all around I see
What claims no inch of destiny
 With the best in me.
What way this world has
Of letting virtue pass;
How it is oft recorded
The best is small rewarded;
How, by one brute-buoyant freak,
Strong ones fatten on the weak;
How my morning tulip-bird
Dies before his heart is heard;
How death comes—and worst,
Truth and love pallored and hearsed,
And there's your pretty country curst!
No, I will not conform—I can see
My way to nobler destiny
By one all-independent me,
We two to count for more than we one
 When all is done.

PEBBLES

HE was rich, this man was—they said it,
He had a Bankdom to his credit,
 So was there primal cause
For his thinking his way he thought,
 That all men could be bought—
 Rich and wondrous wise
 In this, which should suffice:
Men and women have their price.

So he would pause to look
 Women over as I pick my book
From book-shops, sure as light
 He could wed the best of them on sight,
 For was he not made of gold,
 While what under Heaven
 To men is given
 With such sure pull and hold?

It was one middle-August day,
 Each tree stood full as it could carry,
Cricket and finch talked back their way
 Half as if they meant to marry,
Now my gold friend watched in the grass
 A new maid, half-bonneted green,
Check with an August apple gleen,
 An eye like a robin has

Pebbles

For fire in it, for mellow,
While there he watched her for an hour
Sport like a linnet in a flower,
He for one lucky fellow
To feel his heart jump, his cheek
Bubble fire too, try to speak
And not a thought would go,
So was he captured and silenced so.

How well she knew he was watching her,
Yet not her one shy look his way
As there he thought, while he could not stir,
How her step was like the roundelay
Of a wren—soon he must speak,
There was more than he could say,
Longer silence would be weak
And his soul sculptured in each cheek.

So—he plucked one moon-flower out of the grass,
Handed it to her, then only said:
“Beauty is there in yellow and red,
Yet who could let the violet pass?
Over us hovers blue wild air,
Underneath is dancing grass,
Like that copies like a glass
All the high sweet Heaven has,

“Yet in among them you are there
For perfect above all, for fair
As copies no Beauty anywhere!
Now as the chaffinch rings,
Wind whistles, cricket sings,
Let their wild chorus be enough
To call you from your sky above—
Be the soul of me, be my love!”

She knew him and loved him too,
 So knew how he thought his gold could buy
 Soul out of a summer sky
If he loved or not, was false or true,
 Yet kept her secret as on through heather
And larch they took the one way—
 Oh, what a dream is that young day
When two souls breathe together!

Soon were they sitting by the lake,
 She to shovel the cedar sand
For lucky-stones with one small hand,
 He to wonder what, for her sake,
He would not give up, undertake,
 While all the sweet wild while there stirred
Not a nut-leaf you could have heard—
 Two hearts were talking without a word.

Of a sudden she scooped from the sand
 One flat fine pebble round as space,
One side white, the other a face
 Of purple, took it in her hand,
Then this way spoke to him plain and bold:
 "I know how you think of gold,
Your way of thinking it means so much
 That women crumble at its touch,
Lose their senses, loose their hold.

"So this to you—I would have you know
 My gold-heap is large as yours,
I count my thousands by the scores,
 So you may not buy nor tempt me so.
More—I would show you what small stuff

Pebbles

I count my gold in a game of love:
Here is a thing I will do,
I'll match all I have in the world with you

"Against all you have—see, I'll toss
This pebble for gain or loss!
Who wins takes the other's all
And with it the right to say
If we two shall be one one day."
By such means he saw his chance
To get her by lucky circumstance,
Since, if he should win, he could say

She must be his if she would or no,
So he bade her rattle the dice and throw!
One new white place was found in the sand,
The pebble she sent into upper air
Like a bird from a nest in the flower-hand
—The flip was keen as the throw was fair—
Never was die so rashly tost,
For there lay this truth in the sand—he lost!

There he was now at her command,
Pinioned between trap and trick,
Face white as the wrinkled sand,
The soul in him deathful sick
At thought of having lost his hold
On her, on his heap of gold,
Love and fear, trace upon trace,
Pictured so in his young fine face.

"Farewell," she said, now she took his hand—
It was one lord-orange day
Of sun-wonder, chipmunk-play,
Pretty cricket-virelay—

There slept her pebble in the sand,
There too lay his whole heart—
Oh, what is to hope or understand
When souls such as these must part?

Stood they there on the pale beach,
Hand in hand, yet each to each
Like a bright sky all out of reach,
When sudden, just as he thought
To speak, scarce knowing what,
Save one poor whisper to tell
The breathless fearful farewell,
He half felt how his hand was caught

By one little firmer hold, so
As if it was not meant he should go,
Then—she drew him to her gentle way,
While there they were lost in each other's arms,
In freshets of such summer day
Of tree-angles, cup-lily charms—
“I only wanted to show
Only love could buy me—now you know!”

DOCTOR AND PATIENT

DOCTOR:

My doctor's office-boy's mistake
To put pills before powder,
As if one were cake,
'Tother chowder!
There 's the boy of it—i' faith
A boy has wit in his wool
To see a stomachful—
Give him that, you may give him death!
Your tongue!—
Pinky fair,
Good for chat-song or blare
If you have the lung!
Red mullet and mulse
Put kick to the pulse,
So why this pallor-look
Of a perishing lip,
White and thin as leaves of a book,
Scarce open for scarce a sip
Of the plenum air,
Yet so wondrous fair
As it fades
Beyond thorn-apple, fluellen-blades,
I wonder what it is that 's there!

PATIENT:

Wherefore, then, powders, pills?
 Did you think the best of strife
 Or a foremost aim of life
 Is to conquer human death and ills?
 Have a look to it to see!
 Now you say Beauty shows
 For more and more in me
 As pulse quickens, life slows!
 There I was once for such
 A round rose-girl as chime
 Put dancing to you many a time,
 I the spring-leaf in purple thyme,
 Yet you gave me never thought nor touch.
 Then was it I so loved you—
 It may have been because I knew
 There was no hope of having you—
 It might have been for what I saw,
 You, of all men, worth living for—
 Or may be I only longed
 For only what belonged
 To me out of the vast whole,
 You just, part of my very soul.
 Those were holly-sun days:
 How I kept to my heart and ways
 Among moth-mulleins and peach,
 Stripes of stars, plum-ended vine,
 All Beauty and all mine,
 And you there so all out of reach!
 How a woman may not speak
 Lest this weak world think it weak
 To climb higher than trap-rock art,
 Perfect silence of the heart!
 So you never knew!

Doctor and Patient

It might have been different with me
Had I been perfect open-free
To unsoul my soul to you.

But you never saw!

I obeyed the order-law,
As one morning—I know the day
If I see it in the mouth of May—
We both took one cross-cut path
By Bell-Heath if we might catch
The rondel of a robin, match
His rust-red throat, olive patch
With sun-laps across rath—
You, so, stepped ahead a piece,
Nor a thought of me, only of these
Or those oak-angles that elbowed you
To look their way—I knew
My heart had a thing to do,
So broke ranks, put out both palms
Far as I could reach these arms
To offer my whole soul to you
And you turned—I took alarms
At thought of being seen by you
Trying to be frank and true,
So righted myself, carried arms!
That way I lost you—you knew
Never how I could be lovemost-true,
Your heart-part and the whole of you.

DOCTOR:

There now let that be past!
Let us to the task of recompletion!
My powders first, deglutition,
One fight for life, that you may last
To snare crimson in the lip again,

Fling purple eye-light to dart
 Such flash of heart
 As was your wont once, then
 One leap of life for joy again
 By linn, by open stretch,
 Play the bee-bird in a shower
 Of sun to trap the gillyflower,
 Nest in your bunch of vetch,
 I there to be caught, sun-like too,
 At the eye and throat and lip of you.
 Life let us court, not death!
 Once more the sun-honey breath
 Of bright morning, now I see
 Love in you, love in me,
 That all may come around
 Which hovers for us above ground
 To gladden and superabound!
 Never before once I saw
 Beauty such as now in you
 As you lie there I 'm pleading for,
 Soul perhaps, as if it could see
 Through the thin cheek a way of escape
 From the watchfulness of me
 And I see the look of it and shape.
 There, so, your hand—so!—
 You shall not go, you shall not go!

PATIENT:

Your powders then—each one I 'll take—
 Would they might bid me wake,
 Knowing, and so well I know
 I would not leave you so!
 Yet strange to stupendous strange
 Men may not see beyond the range

Doctor and Patient

Of cheek-sight, body-change,
To have one look to what
Remains always to be wrought
Out of what is, and always better
Than the old clutch or foot-fetter
May compass. Be it
What may be, yet you see it
Now for something fairer in me
Than before ever—my lip is white,
Cheek slowly dropping out of sight,
Yet mark how, just as I go,
I have more hold of you—you see
One new look of finer glow,
Sky-heart in the face of me,
Which is soul, else how could there be
More of me to love each day
As the little body slips away?
Once I was round and red
As any girl, yet not for you
Was I worth any looking to
More than the others, so you said.
These arms held out to you my heart,
Soul and body. In each eye
Stood love-light, while just apart
That May morning from where you brewed,
Had you harked, you had heard my sigh,
My soul-whisper, if you would.
I could not have you then,
Much as you saw, past doubt,
How I had singled you out,
My choice-chosen one among men
Now is so little left to me
Of body, and you begin to see
Such fine other side of me,

You would stay me, call me back
 To linn-beach, purple morning track
 Among sea-lemons, whimbrels,
 To dance, you to tap the timbrels
 For song and lip and glass,
 Nor see my soul there as I pass!

DOCTOR:

Life is all—after this
 What 's to gain or miss?
 They have it to make most
 Of sun-patch, meadow-breath,
 Who play shy of pretty ghost,
 Play for life, not death.
 What, i' faith, do you spy
 For power in you now you lie
 Powerless there as chaff
 In a hurricane, your staff
 Of life only weak death,
 You scarce able to draw a breath?
 Your love of me, my love of you,
 What boots it, where 's the prize
 When lip withers, bosom dies?
 Here 's proof, my tiny powder:
 Take it, just once again,
 To wear starlight, silver rain
 On the linn-path—louder
 Life calls than death to you—
 I have my right to you, too,
 Just for one vast love of you.
 Proof that life is all?
 This powder! How pittance-small,
 Nothing most, yet will it keep
 The eyelid from everlasting sleep,

Doctor and Patient

Lift you to reel and dance again
 In the sun-sistered grain.
 What you call soul shall stay or go
 All as my powder wills it—so
 There 's a way for you to know
 This powder, my powder is king,
 Soul nothing, life the only thing.

PATIENT:

Ah, but I lose you so
 If I could turn track,
 Turn to wander back
 To life of your sunful glow,
 As once I was pink-ribboned and fair
 As flesh is, snug in my chain
 Of pretty links of purple vein
 To hold me, to keep me there
 For you to take, yet you would not,
 Nor give me more than one little look
 You give the fly-leaf of a book
 Not worth the thumbing of a thought.
 I was vermilion in the lip,
 Eye-life, tall happy heart
 For you just, yet not one sip
 You cared for till now we must part
 And you see more clearly through
 The white vein than the red or blue
 How my soul deepens and longs for you.
 I go back?—oh, never
 Is a step put back
 On the forefingered track
 Which points off, points on forever!
 You shall follow me through strips of cloud
 To where my star tries to hide

On the other side,
 Shall pick me out of their crowd
 Of worlds—not for you
 Is any loss of what
 Is highest best, spirit-wrought
 For Beauty which is true
 As truth is in the soul in you,
 And lasting too.
 I may not turn back to you;
 Soul must go its way
 Straight on, more soul for coming to,
 New other kind of power in view
 Than makes for breath, palate-play
 To spin life out. As if no other
 Could rival your spoonbill wisdom-brother!
 Body will wither while soul will not;
 Sew that patch on your pauper thought!
 Death comes to put us to the touch,
 To find little of us or much—
 What opportunity like it such,
 What hour so generous-ripe
 For masterfulness of the hero-stripe?
 Light pick-work, tomfoolish play
 Men make of it in the clay.
 Life 's too bonny short to make point
 Of jowl-rule, brisket-joint,
 Seeing, as I see now, how the whole
 Is servant to one mute magic soul.
 Stick to flesh-pots, play cyprus-sipper,
 Drink like a tub-worm at a dipper,
 Yet shall you follow me
 For more which is yet to be
 Than you may gulp at or pocket.
 Play your part of grazing brocket,

Doctor and Patient

Till lastly you come to know
 Soul would not have it so.
 Spirit speaks out in the long run,
 More 's in keeping than moon and sun—
 See how the troops of stars are fair,
 Yet what small part of heaven they share!

DOCTOR:

Oh, but not yet! Not half so soon!
 See, there waits for us the blond moon,
 Sunburnt, all always June!
 Just beyond over your pasture-wall
 Each bee-bike houses new cells,
 Your corn-crake hides in trumpet-bells,
 Gives you his newest call
 To go and try and find him,
 Yet you will not mind him!
 See how the vast world is fair,
 Puts all arms out to you,
 Hands of flax, fire of dew
 To spread one pink-shot heaven for you
 And you do not care!
 Love comes and now you must go,
 If the law be so,
 Into outer air,
 Where none may guess at it to know
 If any more be there
 Than spits of grasses to wave
 Over one little gravel-grave.
 Love comes, yet now you must go,
 While wait for us in each field
 Dogrose breath, freshets of breeze
 In thorn-broom, knee-buckle trees
 And their bird-bugling yield!

Life, joy, love—all these to forfeit,
 Nurse your sick inch of hope
 Of some sky-ended profit
 At which you only squint and grope
 To find the nothing there is of it!
 Off at a gallop is life,
 Spurs to the straddle and strife,
 Hold to the dash which is Might,
 There 's the keen genius of Right!
 Life is put up for a fight
 For more life, just for more power
 To suck breath from a flower,
 Stagger the kick and the blight.
 Hail to the talent to live,
 Power to take and to give!
 What else is certain as this,
 Life is to win or to miss?
 Tumble-rough pig iron bully
 Makes the best of it fully.
 More there may be or may not,
 There 's mere matter of thought.
 Life holds the steeple and ring,
 There 's the sweet truth of the thing;
 So at it, let us be off
 At a gallop, luck in the rough,
 To pick sun, gather yarrow,
 Man is small as a sparrow—
 Try your luck, better trollop
 Than you die like a scallop!

PATIENT:

Best you know your best way
 Is to gain a point of power each day
 To follow me my way

Doctor and Patient

Of holding to what is best,
Of letting go the rest,
Jolly cockles, fly-bubbles,
Balancing sweets and troubles,
To come to dominion the whole,
Come to power, which is soul.
Eye-laugh, hair honeysuckle,
Girl-gurgling heart, soul-chuckle,
Were mine once, yet you would not take
A thought of me. Now that I make
For spirit-shape, which is new,
Other wholly than what you knew
In me when I was life-loaded too,
You would have me back again
To your purposes, vanity life
Of lover, belle-petticoated wife
To bear your young, as if that
Were most this soul is driving at
Like a hog-hawk, to practise rat,
Count noses and gold and fat!
What I am now, my word to you,
Is more than ever before I knew
To dream of—here about me close
Is not lavender nor rose,
Not white light, not conch-blue
Nor what prettys your world to you,
Nor makes for power in it, nor longs
For cymbals, belladonna-lily songs
On happy highways, never stretch
Of poppy, silvester-vetch,
Lattice-leaf, which once I had,
Sun-patch to make me glad—
Yet all about me throngs
Heart-ring of a thousand songs,

Such Beauty, such as you
 Could not put your thinking to
 To call it song or strong or true,
 Corn-color, citron, Saxon-blue,
 Nothing I could tell to you
 Save Beauty on the spirit-side
 Of loveliness, such as is fair
 As no star yellows in blue air—
 Of Beauty such as if what I saw
 Were more than all heart could hunger for—
 Of Beauty such as if Right
 Beamed by a new other kind of light
 Men saw never nor could capture
 For the soul in it of heart-rending rapture—
 Of Beauty I see, now body dies
 And I seem to be all soul, all eyes
 To compass unlanguageed deeps
 Where soul wakes, body sleeps—
 Of Beauty which bells bells in me
 Like nothing between heaven and ground,
 As if the vastitude around
 Were Beauty, all a part of me,
 My own, my all I seem to be—
 And you—have not a fear, my love of thee
 Is fettered as the stars are fixed,
 And, like their breath of gold, is mixed
 For Beauty in my eternity!

BOY SONG

Boy and girl together,
I and you,
To snicker at this weather,
Drench or dew—
A world would never miss us
Without a chance to hiss us.

Let us try together,
You and I,
Robins of the hether,
Try to fly—
A world would never love us
If it could fly above us.

Overtop the devil,
I and you,
Error and the evil
That men do—
A world would never follow
A hero in a hollow.

Take life on the wing,
Fear it not!
What a soul-rotting thing
To be bought,
To let the Heaven choose us,
To let the devil loose us!

Boy Song

229

Not for naught, not for long,
 You and I;
"Higher up," there 's your song
 Of the sky;
Spirit fairer than ever
To tempt men forever.

Not for pay, not for gain
 Is the life,
Nor for loss nor the pain
 Of the strife;
Hard hits make the whole of it
To chisel the soul of it.

Meant for love are the days,
 Not for fear;
To the lute of their lays
 Bend an ear;
Beat your right time to a ring
All for love of the thing.

Think it out, think it clear,
 Think it you!
Come to your truth by no fear,
 Old or new;
Hold to a thought that is yours
All in spite of the Powers!

Pick for truth together,
 You and I,
Robins out of hether
 Unto sky;
Yet let us try the hether
Before we tempt the weather!

Boy Song

Yet is it school, all school
 To one end;
School for foe, for fool
 Or for friend;
So sweet lips the ghost of it,
Try to make the most of it!

ONE AFTERNOON

THOSE were wonderful days by the sea!
Do you remember those days
Made of purple haze,
Leaves in glee?

Remember what sea-song loaded the wind,
How our northern clouds were thinned,
How the white waves grinned
Where we went

Along the beach with so much content
And love, as we thought it then,
Thinking how and when
There should be

One universe just for you and me?
For there is one master truth
We thought of in youth,
Nothing too much

For soul to swallow by sight and touch,
Nothing too great to be known,
Or nothing too much
To be grown

In my inside heart so I may own
All there is which is wide
As the Dog-Star stride,
Worlds beside,

One Afternoon

So I make certain how all I see
Makes but part of what I shall be,
All eternity
Part of me;

For take the vastness of what I call
Great worlds, endless worlds, no all,
And I seem so small,
Yet I see

They make but part of the whole of me,
This sufficient soul of me
To feel and to be!
Mark your moon,

Or Vega forever overhead,
Dying always, never dead,
And his shroud is spread;
Mark how soon

I travel yonder to each new star,
And it matters not how far!
Take this for thought:
Am I not

More than the angle Capricorn makes,
More than Pollux undertakes,
And I come to see
How he,

To get his Beauty must come to me?
Or over there where he sleeps,
Yet his watches keeps,
I may see

Bundles of worlds all eternally
 Making for power and to grow
 To star-spots to glow,
 Yet I see

They only glow in the eyes of me!
 In this soul I kept awhile
 Just under your smile
 You could see

Finger-ends reaching for more to be,
 As once on this beach we stood
 In another mood
 Just to think

Of love and its little passion-link,
 While now that the link is snapped,
 Body handicapped,
 Lip and cheek

Scarce a corpuscle left to speak,
 You may begin now to see
 More is of you and me
 Than you thought

When all but lip and cheek was forgot
 That light love-day you and I
 Hung to cheek and eye
 And breast

And lip-hug—what counted the rest?
 Now are the stars out bright
 In this perfect night,
 And you know

One Afternoon

Body breaks, yet love is not so,
But gives you its full glow
Now your day is gone,
Night is on.

Have one look to the sands to know
How they hang together so,
All as if they knew,
Well as you,

This love is the lasting one thing true!
So take a thought to this end:
See the back unbend,
Body break,

Yet soul forever leans wide awake
If you take this thing to heart:
They will break and go,
Cloud and glow,

Yet you and I were not made to part,
Soul is more than head and heart,
Mighty more than all
Great or small,

And one day I shall come to your call.
Mark how worlds to worlds will run,
How sun ties to sun,
You and I,

Do you think, meant only to die,
Meant for one life and its fling,
As if that were most
God could boast,

While you see how the atoms live and cling?
So I thought, down on the quai,
As I took my way
There to-day,

Of those wonderful other days
You and I once took our ways
By the sea for love,
Thinking of

Only how we were made each for each,
Never thought how out of reach
Much is in one life
However rife,

Thinking only how much we should be,
I to you as you to me—
Then came life between
With its screen,

I only I, while you were all queen,
And somehow I thought I knew
What was right to do
For me and you,

So we parted and you went your way
Of life for a lap of play,
I to my lap of thought,
Yet not

In all these years were you once forgot,
Or loved less than you were then
On the sea-beach when
Life was less

One Afternoon

Than you with your world of loveliness,
While now in your heart I see
My place there for me
As before,

I to cling to it more and more—
Do stars to each other fly,
The while you and I
Draw our sigh

Just only to pass each other by?
One day this body will snap,
Pitch out of my lap
Of thought,

Be brushed aside to be clean forgot,
Yet there remains this I
To be reckoned with,
Soul the pith—

See how it does not want to die!
Yet is death nature and so
Knuckles and chuckles must go,
But yet

I am all I, do you not forget,
My intact self to a dot,
Nor a fever spot,
You shall see,

May put a scar in the soul of me.
Fear not, my time shall be yet,
There is place to get,
Worlds to do,

And soul to join soul, this I and you.
So thinking now of the beach,
Those days out of reach,
And we late,

Yet this soul never once out of date,
Never I come to forget
How all time is yet,
How all space

May spare to us one small hiding-place,
So one day you shall descry,
'Though the winds may sigh,
Worlds may die,

Much is this something called you and I!

AGNES

ONE mullein-stalk grew in a willow-wood,
To a lake's edge the roots were glued,
 And I thought
How each yellow-breasted flower was wrought
To put picture to this very spot.

Lily-bird in a branch next by
Took up his notes between song and sigh,
 And I said
How like a furnace his breast is red
To warm the cold branches overhead!

One coal-feathered crow stood just in back
To make the most of his dead-house black,
 Yet I knew
He was of use in the white world too,
Just as your dark in the soul of you.

See, I said, those are yellowish wings
The mullein-stalk stretches where it clings
 By the lake,
As if there were sky and flight to take,
Yet an old kind earth here to forsake!

Oh, Agnes, I said, there are lip and tongue
In music now, and your days are young—
 Come and see
How the wind is chopped into melody
By yonder butcher-bird in his tree!

Put an ear to this holiday time,
 Each bush will peal you one round of chime
 If you hark
 To the thistle-finch in his yellow park
 Shouting his soul out to make his mark.

Oh, Agnes, here is just such a day
 As you and I made most of one May—
 You were there
 In your sun-path, and like planet-glare
 Was the sheen-dance in your velvet hair.

Or what could it count if winds were wet?
 They drop their pearls to the violet
 All to show
 Whole worlds may shift, winds may leap and blow,
 But Beauty will capture the final glow.

Oh, Agnes, look where your asters lie
 Like peach-bonnets in raspberry dye,
 And I think:
 There hang your grapeleaves, link by link,
 Will you not come while the willows wink?

Will you not come to me where they grow
 Leaves for sun-blossoms so I may know
 There 's a place
 Which waits for you in such garden-space,
 Waits for your girl-grown picture-face?

There I waited while she never came!
 Birds about me were calling her name
 At coral dawn
 As if to tell how spirit is born
 Of what is past in the world and gone.

Agnes

Oh, Agnes, I called, come once again!
Here lies your tree-walk, your sorrel plain
 For one way
You took with me that heatherbell day
I held you in arms like a month of May!

Whatever a breath of life be worth,
Soul is interrupted by this earth,
 But only so
As clouds interrupt each sun-born glow
To turn it to Beauty of chrome and bow.

Could she come and I called? Nevermore so!
My clouds took Beauty to break and go
 As I bent
Where she lay, where her mullein-stalk sent
One finger to point the way she went.

JOCKEY-DAY

STARS, how we flew
To the quarter-post
Like eagles to split the wind in two
And horses most!
I jockey, just jockey I
Who drove the black devil, Furnace Eye—
He was blue banner horse,
All bets on him of course—
But how he knotted stifles to fly!

On to the half,
I was clean ahead,
We scattered space like a strip of chaff,
So the people said—
My horse—how his ears were thinned,
Laid back like tree-tops in a wind—
Heard nothing when they cheered,
Saw not when the half was neared,
And a thousand pockets to him pinned!

Now for the wire,
One squat, one rush,
Eyes set, two side-lights sifting fire
Into spirit-blush—
As I lined him to the pole
I thought his black hide bristled soul—

Jockey-Day

When, just ahead, a child
 Crept in front, cooed and smiled—
 Stop could I not nor caracole

Lest I should lose
 My inside place,
 And not a second in which to choose
 If to win the race
 And mix the child with the moor,
 A thing my heart could not endure,
 Or shuffle sideways instead,
 Let Cobwebs come in head,
 'Though it left a thousand pockets poor—

When, quick as thought
 I shifted place—
 In just that instant the child was caught
 And clinging to my face,
 I third as the wire was neared,
 Fearful, each second, I should be jeered,
 When, the people from all parts,
 Like a hurricane of hearts
 Shouted my praises—oh, how they cheered!

I to the stall,
 There to wait
 For the master's cut-loose caterwaul,
 His showers of hate
 For losing—no reason for!—
 Buried my bones in a clump of straw,
 Thought I could hear a sigh
 From the heart of Furnace Eye
 For having lost too—no reason for!

"Mercy, sire,
 God knows as 'ow
 I could not kill the child no-ways, sire,
 As look at it now
 How I did me my best
 To beat the gang—sire, you know the rest—
 But to kill the child
 And it cooed and smiled,
 Not for this world and my soul and breast!"

Arms both out wide,
 The master flew
 To where the boy shrank and winced and cried,
 Caught him, kissed him through,
 Held him as a Concord vine
 'Round a bough fastens lips to twine,
 And "God, boy, come closer—so—
 Tell me, did you not know,
 Did you not know the child was mine?"

THE MAN OF IT

LIKE as her cloak—
And it hangs now over my shoulder-wall,
Tassel and all,
To do my law if I never spoke—
I would hold her so she should see
For the best of truth
By a test of youth,
How the best of all is the man of me.

For so it is,
Since I must rule—this nature makes it so,
While whether or no
I do my best, the one thing is this,
To bring her to come to see
How, after all,
Her world is small,
While the best of it is the man of me.

My kingdom come,
My will be done if I have her to keep,
Take her to reap
The best of her to lose not a crumb—
I shape her shoe-latch to just my way,
Each white new hand
Like a velvet band
I held for my own on her marriage-day.

Love swallows love,
 Is masterful, jealous to full of greed,
 And the man-made need
 Is this: The whole is never enough
 To plump one fancy, glut my will;
 I shape her bow
 Of shoe-latch so
 I shall be master and master still.

Such is the way
 Of worlds—look I about to see
 How, fixed or free,
 Each star has a mind to hide each day
 Soon as the sun-lord sweeps into place
 With an eye-shot stern
 From his bosom-burn
 Which would see them quiver to hide their face.

You bite your lip?
 Have an instant's patience and not so quick!
 You see I pick
 This polianthes' white-hooded slip,
 I crush it into nothingness
 To get the whole
 Breath-sweetened now!—
 Would you say, thereafter, I loved it less?

My essonite
 I make a knuckle of to keep it close
 As a Sharon rose,
 Yet so I may have it first in sight
 To clasp one finger, I to share
 The pink of it
 And blink of it
 That I may bend it to master it there

The Man of It

For part of me—
See how it clings to my knuckle-end
To glint and bend
As I would have it—now shall you see
How each new twist I give it will spill
Another spark
Between lids of dark
And I watch it to never get my fill!

There shall be one,
Not two—there 's the way I would think of you—
While if you knew
The atom-way since the world begun,
How each two atoms must come to one,
You would say "Take me
For one with thee
By the law of my love—thy will be done!"

I see, instead,
How you long for power that you may be free
Of the man in me
Which loves and rules—power to wed
More freedom so to get more power,
As if to rule
Made one bosomful
Of life, or made life worth an hour!

My way of love
Is to master to make you one with me;
But look to see
Your own way which perches clean above,
Nor bends one hair of power or will
To bring me to
My step with you,
So masters to overmaster me still,

As there you lie,
 A thing all Beauty so, just in my hand
 Like a garnet-brand,
 Took your red lip from yonder sky,
 Yet you keep me there fast to your cheek
 For not one word
 Which could be heard,
 But just by the Beauty which may not speak,

 Most as the bee
 Will light to strut his strut like a king
 On a clover-wing
 For the power of it to be foot-free
 To pick all sweet out, get his share,
 Yet this summer balm
 And pink new charm
 Will capture to win him and pin him there.

 The king am I,
 And you the flower of ople-tree breath
 Which whispereth:
 "My king are you, yet there you lie
 Like a bee in a rose and no way out,
 Since you would not go
 If you could, and so
 I rule you, too, by my way, no doubt."

 So leave me be
 To be the man of me through and through
 To show to you
 My kingdom-will, that you may see
 By what I would do for love of thee,
 By life at its best,
 The world and the rest,
 How the best of all is the man of me.

VIEWFULLY

I

MAN has of him more than he may be
In one small pocket of eternity.

There 's good reasoning to show me what
Soul is, what it is not,

A thing of which all things may he posited,
Not to be shoe-shackled or once closeted,

More of it always and always to be got,
Made for greatliness somehow to be wrought
Out of battle, the close clinch of resistance—
There 's the secret of this existence!

One tumbles into one mistake
Of mourning over his ache;

One whimpers at his pie-fly lot
Because he could gulp and glutton not;

One groans at his hoghood belly
Of kitchen-tricks, his mountain of jelly;

Life looks to most like good to be got
At high hazard and whether or not,

While scarce the man looks ever about
To see good in him to be got out.

Look once to the east and north,
Then to your force to be put forth

For man-masterfulness to fight
The Thor-God or northwind bite,

While over in yonder warm west
Is your sun-grave, your cenotaph-rest!
Time has come in the world to own
This soul is meant to be grown;
But how grown? Scarce by evasion-trick,
By kneeling to crux or candlestick—
Now in the world is time it were known
Soul was meant to be mightied and grown
By battle, by just the bold master-lick
Of pluck and purity against odds
To force men to be dominant Gods.

II

Once was this quaint story told
In such long-ago day when men thought
He grew greatest whoever got
Most the world could give of gold
Or joy or the glutton-lot
Of cormorant to stuff his pot:
Two men began life one way,
Each his boy-heart and chuckle-play,
Or rough at it for cuff and row
The boy-way, as they know how.
One grew up his way to think
Man means mostly gullet and sink
To take in, give nothing out
More than bill-whistle, stuffy pout,
Whistle to sound his pleasure
Once he thinks he gets full measure,
Pout if he fears he may get less
Than his own and his neighbor-brother's mess.
First he reasoned how he was hollow,
(Right he might have been in that!)

Next he knew he was meant to follow
One supernal talent to swallow
—His point in life worth aiming at—
So first the thing to be got was gold;
What could there be in life without gold
A man should cherish to have and hold?
Book is to read, thought is to swallow,
Man is meant to bend and follow,
Is meant, too, to compass all pleasure
Till he get his bottleful-measure—
Not what he gave, but what he got
He counted gain and lucky lot,
While each new day most people knew
The more he got the smaller he grew.
How to grow soul was a thing
Clean outside his reckoning—
How to grow body fatful-tough
Was art-most, so quite enough.
So grew the body of him great,
Pig-sty style made upper thought,
Genius just to aggregate
Stomach to hold to, whether or not,
So there he bibbled and ate,
So, too, he stuffed his skull
Book-wise till each wit was dull—
Also the eye must be glutted,
Much as each cheek puffed and puttied,
Till fairly he came to see
What is, never what is to be—
Gave himself up too to hearing
Till soon he grew to be what he heard,
Never his will to utter a word,
Never one thought of interfering
With wrong in the world he saw,

While truth was scarce worth breathing for.
Each day by little, men could see,
Soul in him grew less and less
Down to next to nothingness
Till now was left of him not so much
As the tom-bee grapples in one clutch.
There so he died, while one would say
He grew nothing more than clay
By his sponge-life and diaphragm-play.
Oh, friend, soul is to be grown,
As like your child in arms,
To whom is nothing known,
Soon will take on body-charms,
While there I see him begin to grow
From not a soul enough to wink
Up to his heart to feel and think
And greaten each way so
From the thing he was at first,
Scarcely more than his pump of thirst,
Basket genius, surcloyed, cloddy,
Little more than wholly body—
And now the man—there the last whole of him
Is the rising sizing soul of him!

III

Think you all soul is there
Whether you will or not,
Or that soul is soul to be got,
Like blossom in an April air
Which forced one straight way up,
Now at storm, now at sun
Ever since the tug begun,
First a claw, then the cup

And lip and throat to try
One taste of orange water-green sky?

IV

My other boy took another thought,
Began life by looking about
To see what wrong he could put to rout,
What kind of goodness could be wrought
By the most which he could make of him,
So he let the world take of him
His best he had, struck to make
Most of himself, put his world at stake
To do the thing which was right
For love of it, struck to do
His highest most, his best he knew
For never the half of a thought
Of what he should gain by it, what not,
Only that he should gather his might
To straighten him to his highest height—
No bending before Power,
No whining, but just truing
His soul to see it tower—
Will God not see men up and doing
To stand alone, to rise alone
By force of virtue and straight man
To deepen the heart, widen the span
To reach inside the spirit-zone?—
What shall the good God compass to do
To put me crouching to him, to you?—
Never an atom of you to cower,
Yourself foremost and against Power
By man-mastery to build soul
Out of resistance and the whole

Of trueness, kindness, virtue,
And there 's no Power to stop or hurt you—
Power is beyond me and above,
Power for me to acquire and love
For ever and for never enough.

v

Such was his way he took to life,
Did his best, hugged the strife
Which allowed him nor kingdom nor wife,
Kingfully at it to the last
To stop never to count the cost
Of his small world here which he lost.
Now that his life was past,
Now the thin vein begun to tingle,
Now soul and blood grew slow to mingle,
You would say surely he played
To life which borrowed, yet never paid;
You would say his battle with earth
Brought him the back slap of pure dearth,
Left him bodiless most, old,
Dewlap-wrinkles, fold on fold,
Now soul was withdrawing from its mould.

vi

But hark, there 's a voice in air,
One music-voice, like a morning wind
Which never was lowered or thinned,
A child's voice, the silver sound was there,
All heart-leap and not a care!

Said the child: "I know of you!
They say your way in the world was sad

Viewfully

Where the rest were merry-glad,
They tell how you hung to what was true,
Made the noblest best of you,

“Till now they say you will die
And nothing 's for you who did so well,
Save only your passing-bell
And narrow ground-spot below the sky,
Yet never one reason why

“You who are manfullest man,
Who gave your life to the rest of men
To have it never again,
Should take your place, on the ground-worm plan,
To die under mock and ban.

“Just the child I am you see,
And scarce a thing of the world I know,
Yet this thought haunted me to and fro:
One mighty bond fastens you and me,
One love and one life to be,

“Since you with the world are through,
Have lived your life and are out of it,
While I am, past a doubt of it,
Not yet of the world to be or do,
Only a child—so are you

“One with me in this one way:
Out of the world we are dropped, you see,
Nothing here for you or me
To look to, neither a part to play,
And the world will go its way

“To leave us this much behind—
Are we not one by the spirit-plan,
I the child and you the man,
Both of a soul which is high inclined,
Both of one new unworldly mind?

“Is there not for you and me
Place in the vast eternal places?
Think you their endless spaces
Make homes for atoms and not for me,
Waste lands of eternity?

“More is man than man may know,
For there 's my sign in my yonder star—
Look how it smalls and is far,
And now at my cheek with such copper glow
That I may see and may know,

“By what there is to be seen,
How light in me is the light out there,
How the soul of things is fair,
How more is to be than what hath been,
More than eye or heart hath seen!

“So take my hand, let us go
Our way, one way which I know of you,
A way which is highest true
To point to straight where my star-spots glow,
And I will follow you so,

“For love is long when you find
Two souls which are one by the common lot
Of Beauty and part-me-not,
One above body and world and mind,
All meant to be left behind.”

VII

He died—the child grew up her way,
Took her place in the world—there's much
To see and think of and taste and touch,
Many a game to counter-play
Before soul comes with a thing to say—
For now she was here at a dance, now there
To hear one tell how her cheek was bright,
How spirit spoke in her shoulder bare,
In the elbow-point now the skin was tight
To shine like an eye to you, brown and white—
Listened while one unbuttoned his heart,
Not a trap-word nor breath of art,
But she was his whim and counterpart—
Men grew 'round her each mellow hour
As bees light at their almond flower
For what was most of her and fair
To find opal only or topaz-glare,
Just her cold color which was there
As up she grew, as on she went
Never to turn to the world one cheek
For love, for one little incident
To find her forgetting her childful vow
To follow him who had gone before—
She should have him her way somehow,
Since always beyond us is more and more.
So she grew old as he was once,
Played her part in the world so well,
Stood to hard duty against affronts
Till now the neighbor ones love to tell
How she kept her vow, how she did so well,
Came through the world, would not part
From her highway of the heart,

Her longing and power to do
Her best, as he did too,
To hang to the world to train each mood
For mastery and some monster-good—
Shall she not have him one day
By her deeper heart, her higher way?
Have you a doubt of whether
Two souls like such souls come together?

OOTRUM AND CORNCOCKLE

ONLY a buttonhole knot of flowers—

Her's was a way

Each morning of each amiable day

At early hours

To tap her new garden-bed

For a flower which was white or salmon red,

While he, her pet of the salmon eye,

Took his place

Where he could show her his welcome grace,

Could draw his sigh

To be seen of her and heard;—

As if his thin spirit could be stirred!

All things for him! So, smart as a wink

She was there,

And never thought nor blossom to spare,

Corn-flower or pink,

As if his soul could be muched,

Or the heart in him anyway tapped or touched!

What of that? Was he not above her

By height of hat,

While what should a girl ask more than that

Of any lover?

To see him at his full height

Was enough—men would fancy the girl was right.

He was her right hand and ready choice—

 All could see

Her eye dance like a meadow-bee

 At his voice—

All could see her wince to show

How she looked up to him, loved him so.

Think you he thought the same way too,

 Had a mind

For aught which was love or half way kind

 Or any way true?

Not he, by the Powers that rule!

He took his cue of another school!

Women to him were flowers to be picked,

 Were birds in air

To fly to to get the Beauty there,

 Meant to be tricked

And wheedled and fooled to death—

What is life here more than a breath?

This clean high morning of May she drew,

 For love of him

And to please her heart and girlhood-whim,

 To where there grew

Ootrum and corncockle rare,

While she twisted their stalks for his breast to wear.

I saw her rush to him, flowers in hand,

 As if to say:

Here is my heart for you to stay

 And understand!

I saw her fingers do their part

As if each had soul in it and heart.

I heard the gate growl as he went,
 For where I eyed
I saw him toss the flowers aside
 As if he meant
To put her clean out of mind
So soon as he left her sweet look behind.

There was I quick at his heels and took
 The flowers to me—
Now was my chance to let her see
 His robber-look,
His self, nor a word to shade him,
But just as he was for fact as God made him.

So next day right as she came to see
 Her flowers at my breast,
Never a word, yet doing their best
 To speak for me,
I saw, 'though no need of sight,
Her heart prick the sweet lip red and white.

“The flowers are mine, as you see,” I said,
 “For I plucked them there
As they lay in the grasses unaware
 Of sky overhead—
Mine, they are mine and to keep!
Will you wake them, or will you let them sleep?

“I caught them right as he flung them aside,
 While but for me
There they had lain for none to see,
 Had drooped and died—
May I not wear them for true
And for just my one manfullest love of you?

"For time will come and the whole truth will
 When you shall see
Inside the soul and heart of me,
 Where thought is still,
Your image, the which I wear
For the power and the hope of me everywhere.

"Do you love him now, one day shall come
 To think of it
How his soul he has is gridiron and spit
 And bubble-hum—
Lo, he shall pass out of sight
As a cloud half hung to an edge of night!"

Then came one tiny smile when she said:
 "Yes, you may wear
My flowers for thought of me, if you care—
 But know instead,
My heart has been stript and left
That I may grow the wiser for the theft.

"Patience, therefore, is the thing I ask,
 That you may know
This soul was meant to deepen and grow—
 There 's my task
To make my heart over new
To wisen and deepen and grow to you!"

KNOW THY TASK

I

Now goes my scrub-man scrubbing
At one round big pig-headed spot
Which daubs his floor. If he tries or not,
On he goes scraping, rubbing,
Doing his mortal best at it
To scrub the spot out, bit by bit,
Never gaining ground a whit.

II

Lather and sand, what a mess
Of grit and grease and knuckleness
He deals the spot to rub it out,
Flings himself that rough about,
One might say, and no jest,
Give him time enough at his best
He 'll rub the world out by his zest.

III

Strange one thing about it was:
'Spite of any way he worked,
Of how his elbow jammed and jerked
Like mulishness and never a pause,
Never yielding his hold a pinch,
In spite of his each dig and clinch
The big spot yielded never an inch.

IV

Spoke I to him then this way:
 You hold a purpose high in hand
 To take such spot out of floor or land
 And it a part of the common clay!
 Look how it sticks in place,
 Baffles you a thousand ways,
 Neither greatens nor decays!

V

Mebbe if you stop to think
 You may choose to let it stay,
 Rest your elbow, save your swink
 For a better kind of pay—
 Spots are spots, one part of earth
 Meant to give the bright side birth,
 Show what cleanliness is worth.

VI

Or they stick like a gang of plasters
 To rule you, become your masters—
 Look at you now there trying to please:
 One spot has brought you to your knees,
 Hangs you on hinges like a gate,
 Puts you swinging early to late,
 Gives you your crooked crab-ankle gait!

VII

Subtle spots—how little you know them!
 One way you have of thinking is
 You better be above than below them!
 Another view of the thing is this:

Know Thy Task

There 's your spot of ugly brown
Underneath the feet of a town,
Yet bends your back, holds you down!

VIII

There 's my spot on yonder sky,
One cloud only, small as the pup,
Yet has a sun for an eye
Looks down to me while I look up
To catch the up-Heaven view
Of heliotrope quivering through,
Cherry in a soul of blue.

IX

Rub and scrub and stamp—
But look, there 's a light behind you,
Only a bob-about lamp
I place in front just to unblind you
And, lo, your spot is gone,
Has shifted back of you anon—
Only your shadow you scrubbed upon!

X

Who may rub himself out,
Work he never so wisely?
Who may put soul to rout,
Aim he never so nicely?
Man and spirit are fast friends,
Completely 'round him the shadow trends,
Shadow begins where body ends.

THE MAN MILITANT

WHAT could be worse
Than a universe
At poverty-pitch,
 You and you
To beg a way through,
Contented to tie a shoe,
 Scratch an itch,
Happy at the thought
Of what you are not,
Your foot in my meadow-trap ditch?
 Our universe
Holds nothing worse
Than Power to be acquired,
For look to the deeps to see
 Whole high sublimity
Of Beauty, the Power to be desired!
You are my militant-man
 To fight out a way
 To your new other day
Of deeper sight-light, loftier span.
So hark to my story which was told
 By people growing old
In hill-life, mountain-climbing,
So knew a way of soul-subliming
By climbing and ever climbing.

I

He was thirty, my strong man was,
 Had fought his way in forty wars
For single-handed mastery
 The way the world does to get power
Which comes of hatred and devastery
 And men are taught to kneel, to cower.
So he came forward in the world,
 Making his way by force of arms;
He should be gold-purpled-earled,
 Take on buttony, kenspeckle charms,
Play first host, popular prince
 To watch men buckle their lips and wince
And wallow in subordination—
 What mattered the whole bright creation
If he could grind his people down
 To lickspittle, worship his frown?
What mattered it, too, if his father
 Picked life out of one one-handed farm?
Would he not therefore rather
 His son should swing mightiest arm
For certainty to command,
 His word to perch law-like in the land?
One thing in life he mastered first,
 To make his way up the world to most high—
Shall a man not satisfy thirst,
 Glut his fancy ere he die?—
So was his creed to crowd his way up,
 Seize the crown-most, drain each cup—
There was the life of it, one high hill
 To mount to to get his fill,
Nor look to it once to stop
 Till he should stuff his quadrangle-crop.

II

Came now his time to love,
 Came now his first glimpse above
Commony, higher than the world,
 Sky-ways where light is hurled
Against us that we may climb
 Towards it, moth-like, out of dark and slime,
Soon to learn how man-hearted struggle
 Counts men more than to dodge and juggle.
Gerald should wed, so the father thought:
 Soon came the lady, like blessings do,
Oft when you seek them not,
 As if for sweet surprise to you,
Came in one unawares-way
 Like this: One wonderful afternoon
Of an ivory lapstreak day in tune
 He took him to the river,
The deep Willowquiver,
 To watch his moonfish play,
To wander there, perchance to think
 What spirit talks through a meadowink,
Or sorrows because time has begun
 To pick wrinkles in the moon and sun,
When, right as he halted at the brink
 Next to the bridge high overhead
To harken to one bobolink,
 Watch him sidle from green to red,
Sudden enough there caught his eye
 In the water-mirror under
Such form of a girl as drew his sigh
 To hold him heart-bound just for wonder
At the Beauty of her—nor he stopped to see
 If the sight could be true reality,

The Man Militant

But like an arrow in the blue is lunged,
Swift as thought is, in he plunged,
Down without a pause
Clean to where the figure was
To find, of all that seemed so fair,
Only the shadow of her there.
Up he came next, while there
On the bridge, looking eager-wise
To know if she could trust her eyes,
Stood the same figure, sumptuous-fair,
He too looking to see
What he now took for verity,
Such a sun-girl as the sun
Seemed to cling to, each side,
As if he were full of finger-pride
At his masterstroke—now for a run
Up the bank—now he begun
His first lesson to climb
Higher than life to what is sublime
Above thinking, beyond doubt—
Beauty—the only one thing ever
Man looks to, yet may compass never,
Past losing, past all finding out.
Soon he was there at her pretty hand,
Spell-held so by what he saw,
His Undine-girl for not a flaw,
She too all heart to understand
He plunged in, never a quaver,
Bounden to see if he could save her.
There in that plump afternoon
Of such honeysuckle June
They stood on their semi-circle bridge,
Each to look in the other's eyes,
Two eagles on one mountain-ridge—

Should they leap up to outface skies,
Or make descent to pick up earth
And its twopence-worth?
Leastwise now the day was enough,
So, too, was their purpose—love!
Down to the fields he plunged again,
Brought her one apple-blossom branch
He smothered so in holly
That she should see his heart was stanch,
See he would clasp and hide her wholly—
Then to show how he could love her
Like aught below, since nought was above her,
He pointed down in the river-deep
To where her shadow now was fast.
Like Beauty in everlasting sleep,
Glad to have given up all its charms
Into the lover-river's arms,
“There,” he said, “rather would I
Leave life, plunge in and die
By the side of you there where you lie
In image, than lose you now
I have you under sun and bough,
As only my heart could whisper how
I love—there 's your bottle-green
Ribbon-flower, I see your star,
Green too, I see it bubble sheen
Or rouge of cinnabar—
There 's your chat-call in yonder bough,
Yet you may not tell me how
He makes this June wind tingle,
How deep in his dancing eye,
Sprung wide at his own ballady,
Fire and spirit seem to mingle—
There 's Beauty under the sun,

The Man Militant

Star-ticketed, blood-shotten,
Yet one thing nearly were forgotten,
I and you were meant to be one
Or Beauty to be left undone.

Away, away
Over meadow and sea
For love, for a day
And life with me—
Few are the hours,
Brief the play
Of my sparrow-flowers —
Life is to glut
To the over-jut,
Meadow to pick,
Shadow to cheat
All for a lick
Of honey sweet—
Winds to their sighs,
Sorrow to bleat
And purpose dies!—
Love is for lip,
For whitèd arm,
Never to slip
The elbow-charm
Or captainship
Of one small new palm—
Sorrow is long,
Love as brief
As your lilac-leaf,
Life 's for the strong—
Mighty or small,
Make of it much,
Death has a clutch,

Lips have a tingle-touch
Keenest of all!"

III

Thereso now as they stood,
Lip against lip at the bridge's rail
Each in one life-forgotten mood
When soul is master, thoughts fail,
Right as he caught at her locks of hair
To swallow the sunshine which was there
And not a spark's sparkle he could spare,
Held her for life, for death,
Scarce willing she should give a breath
Lest the corn-flower unloose its knittle,
Reach up just to snatch a little—
Right as he thought he had her to hold
Fast as a strip of marigold,
She looked him longingly in the eyes,
Brought him to this subtle surprise:
"My image is there, hung in your eyes,
Just my image is all you see,
Only a sunlight sketch of me,
Nothing more than what you saw
In the river just underneath,
Nothing that could think or breathe,
My image you plunged and sputtered for—
A shadow is all you see,
Just the tiny shadow of me
Like nothing I am really—
Likewise so is your blossom-lip
For sweetness, and I must let it slip
For the thin air which stands between us
Just to separate and screen us—

The Man Militant

See, too, how you look to rejoice
 At my midsummer-welcome voice,
 When all you get is this message-air,
 Only the ripple of me is there!
 Just to think of it how men look,
 And life is one conundrum-book,
 Nor matters it how they try to guess
 And the answer there always, 'Yes and yes!'
 So say I 'Yes,' there is for me
 One surmounting reality
 To ply to, put shoulder at,
 And no God lives to deny me that!
 Try to look how you will to see,
 You get only the image of me
 If you look for me in my eyes
 Or down where the river lies,
 To prove you, by wind or rivulet,
 The time to have me is not yet,
 Is not here, is not now
 Under heaven, under this mountain bough.

"So-ho, I 'm the mountain-girl,
 My people the mountain climb
 Fast where star-winds purl
 To tumble thought into chime—
 So-ho for the way I go
 Clean above earth beyond
 Doghood and bond
 Where my sunbeams blow
 Little crystals of snow
 Into amber frond,
 Into lilac-wings,
 Into heavenly kings!

“So-ho for the way I see
Above cheap immunity
Always to climb and climb,
Always from height to height,
Always my blue-line flight
Above knuckles and time
For more soul and might
And point sublime!
Never to weary a day,
Never to drop by the way
Is the life I sing
For your listening,
Is my calling of bride
Up the mountain-side,
Is my hope for you
That you strike to do,
That you follow me
Where I look and I see
Beauty beyond in the zenith blue,
We to be one with it, never two,
Your heart in mine, my heart in you!”

v

Now an edge of evening was on,
Softly she turned to him, lightly said:
“Only an instant turn you your head”—
Right as he looked again she was gone!
There crept her river as before,
Overhead her bridge was swung
Like a rainbow of mushroom tongue,
And not an image of her more
In the river which wallowed under,
He with his heart of baffled wonder

The Man Militant

To know where he should find her—
 Sudden her words were back to him
To climb, there was her mountain-whim
 And he must follow, he must mind her,
For had she not said: "Up above earth
 If you would get your trouble-worth?"
Off to the mountain he followed,
 Dark was on, day was swallowed—
What of the nothing-night
 So I hold to my peak of light?
There was her noble mountain high
 Reaching nearly to the sky
Where the color-clouds flower and die—
 He should be man for all might
Through the worst of it to take flight
 Where the snows smuggle eternal light!

VI

Up a piece of the mountain now,
 Short piece up, there he saw
One temple-dome like a narrow brow,
 One priest with his lobster-claw
To clutch and chew and swallow
 The soul of a man if he came to follow—
Said the Priest, with this smacking lie:
 "Since man was made to mildew and die,
Better for him he knuckle under—
 Up above is a slap of thunder,
Fire to split the noblest sky,
 So have a care how you venture up,
Or drink wisdom out of a skull,
 Which, at best, is one shallow cup,
Narrow waisted, bottom up,

So holds nothing, but only spills
 Knowledge overboard fast as it fills.
 Above this temple you may not climb
 Whose dome is an envelope of truth—
 Here is a place to plant your youth,
 Since here is God's one point sublime
 Above which there goes no going
 Save where you see the wild snow blowing
 Into ravages to beat you back
 If you would mount by a higher knack,
 If you would transcend the Temple-track.
 But, hark, here is a temple of peace,
 Puts soul and mind of you at ease—
 Once you take to my way of winking
 There 's no further need of thinking—
 Be cocksure of it I know best,
 I give you dormancy and rest,
 Heaven to lust for, life to plunder
 If you stop here and knuckle under."

GERALD.

I lost my heart in the plains below,
 So is there any wonder
 I look aloft there yonder
 For Beauty, the way I saw her go,
 One way she pointed I should know,
 Her lavender-path, 'though it go
 Straight against winter's biting snow?
 Beauty took root in earth,
 One whole pink oleander-worth,
 But there it could not stay,
 So bore flightward one evening-day,
 And so I lost her. There she went

The Man Militant

Climbing this mountain-monument
 To Beauty, there where sun and leven
 Put their pigment of rose
 Or straw-stripe against the snows
 Which fall like autumn-leaves of Heaven.
 By just what a man opposes,
 That much he gains in power—
 See where your mountain rose is
 Higher than you, look how the flower
 Makes for height nor counts any cost,
 Hand to hand with fire and frost
 'Though the Paradise-fields below be lost!
 You mark time, set your limit,
 There 's your eyesight of the emmet
 Which builds you a dome like an ugly pout
 To shut your sky-view and great Self out.
 There are you hanging to earth
 And its hobgoblin-birth,
 Witch-worried, looking for pay,
 Cringe and worship and skulk and pray,
 Nor look how yonder mountain points
 Where Pleiades' lustre-spot anoints.
 For me no part of your earth
 Now I see how Beauty rises
 Where boundless sky and spirit-size is
 Above all price or temple-worth.
 I 'm the man for beating my way
 Into more than this cuticle-play,
 So I 'm to have my thought and say,
 I 'm to be I, there 's the princely point
 Puts your shy nose out of joint;
 I 'm to be I, there 's the kingly thing
 Counts without your reckoning;
 I 'm to be I, no part of you

For paste-pot service that you may glue
My nose to your pet bugaboo,
Since God made a man one way so
He should shoulder-spread to know
Soul was fashioned to climb and grow.
By my life I will reach to Beauty,
The thing among worlds worth growing to,
None of your Heaven for booty,
None of the halt and hitch of you,
But my way at it, mine, mine,
This soul-self of me, which is divine,
Out of reach of your tongue and tine.
You proclaim the weakness of man
And smallness of him, his sufferance,
His mink-eyed insignificance,
To map your ecclesiastic plan—
I proclaim his omnipotence,
His power of spirit for striking high
As worlds puncture the target-sky,
The will of him to do his best
For none of your bribery or behest,
His heart to love, to endure,
While nought he knows, nothing sure
Save the tiger-leap of death
To down him and snap his breath,
He single-handed against Power
To snuff his heart out on the hour,
He to pilot his way against dark,
He to laugh at your blizzard-bark,
He to endure as Gods endure
For the true man in him, nothing truer,
All quantity of new desire
For highest Beauty, nothing higher,
Foremost for truth, to hold to his way

The Man Militant

By not one quirk you have to play,
His truth just, his merely,
Howsoever it strike you queerly,
For there's the man of him to be grown
To own himself, he wholly his own,
And nowise for once your whelp
To follow your quill-whistle, bloodhound yelp.

Ah, but here you lug God in,
Tie him to my wrist or shin,
By which you think to make more of me
Than I alone by myself could be—
You would see me dependent, uplooking,
Good for a leaf in your noodle-booking,
Whip-snap just, lip of wax
To take impression of your knacks—
While all the while is it not true
There 's nothing nobler a God should do
Than make another God of you?
Oh for once to be like a God
In contest with a universe
From gaping sky to gaping sod,
To care not for better, for worse,
Nor for what may come in the end
Save only where the stars abscond
There 's other finer Beauty beyond
For me to make to and make of
And no lack of it, yet never enough,
Seeing I compass more truth of thought
Than in my single life may be wrought,
Endless perfecting by endurance,
By manfulness of soul and heart
To make the most of me, do my part
At self-construction by hard duty,

By force of pure-hearted intention,
 No compromise, only fierce contention,
To know I 'm building eternal Beauty
 By freedom more and more so to be
Myself God-fashion eternally!
 Put foot foremost that way so,
There 's no God to say you no,
 For what were nobler a God should do
Than make another God of you?

VII

Higher than the church, up he clomb
 Sky-ward towards the purple dome
Into which his mountain-peak jointed,
 Star-bottled, soul-anointed—
Upward he made his way
 Above church to where he saw
One other kind of temple-claw
 Up-reaching as if to snatch
God-secrets, lift the latch
 Of Heaven—there in the rock,
Stuck like a headpiece on a clock,
 Was the Temple of Knowledge, a way to know
How sun blows hot and cold at me so,
 How a little gum-sweet ether
Makes me the longer better breather—
 Temple of Knowledge—never he shunned it,
When out came the thought-lord and master pundit.

GERALD

I lost a maiden in this mountain—
What say if I tap your wisdom-fountain,
 You to tell what whim inclined her
This way, or what way I may find her.

PUNDIT

Higher and ever higher!
 Knowledge may point only, may not tell
 The whither-ward of this human spell,
 One whimper of this soul-desire,
 One heart-beat in my passing-bell!
 Yesterday only I saw her go
 Above us to where the night-moon charks
 Snow-drops into jumping sparks,
 The Beauty of her fair as a glow
 You must have seen in an evening sky
 When clouds have descended to earth to die
 While they keep to their geranium-slip,
 One touch of Heaven on the dying lip—
 Up there I saw her go
 As if she sought the moonbeam snow
 For Beauty which was like her so—
 So say I your way is there
 Above earth, where hope is fair,
 Is constant, like the sky-white air.

VIII

On up again higher still,
 Above knowledge, above belief—
 Now came his tug of will
 By each lofty effort to put
 More of his mountain under foot—
 Only one temple was there above,
 The over-dome which stands so fast
 For Beauty which was meant to last,
 All arms, one Temple of Love,
 Highest above earth, higher than you
 May get by your crochet-cockatoo

Mouth-practice which keeps you trying
To mimic so you forget your flying—

There was his mountain high
Leaning against the sky,

The two of them cheek to cheek
As if they had one heart to speak,

When, right as he looked to see
Such whirlwind of sublimity

As twisted the stalks of snows
Til they flowered like clover blows

Or any marvel of bridal-rose,
Right as the lightning was knitting

Cloud and mountain together
Til I would say the sky was fitting

A new shape of orange feather
To each snow-cap, all in a rain

Of silver dust, each pretty grain
To hold one little bloodstone stain

For Beauty for crystal-fair
Like flocks of opals in the air—

Quick as he looked, there there came
One cloud, hung like a curtain of flame,

Which lifted, while just underneath,
Snow-pale, scarce a wish to breathe,

Was his loved one—there she lay
In stillness, as white snow lies

And dwindles just before it dies—
'Round her was coral orange day,

Such another day I never saw,
Pink-lighted fire in lavender—

Circles of strawberry red
Made their wheel-work over her head—

Such strange mountain pinnacle-play
Of sun and snow-feather took place

The Man Militant

As never ever—there was the trace
 Of Heaven about her hiding place
 When now he did his best to draw near,
 Nor could he at once, such was the clear
 Strong dazzle of it where she lay
 Like a lily in a sun-bath spray
 Of new other colors and keener play.
 First he must custom him to such sight,
 Which blinded, as if the treacle-light
 Grew Beauty only to pinch and blight.

IX

Now she saw him—how their eyes
 Rushed together torrent-wise
 Loaded with longing, spirit size,
 As there he was now at her lips
 Like a philenor at a pear-flower sips,
 Now in arms he held her to get
 Her heart-beat, her hair of mignonette,
 Her whole soul, held her close
 As south winds wrap a cotton-rose—
 His, his, wholly his,
 Not a look of her to miss,
 And she so gone, such pallor-glow
 As scarce he could tell her cheek
 From each shriveling lip of snow,
 Which kept curling and failing to speak—
 Scarce more he held than the ghost of her,
 Her sweet soul, best and most of her
 As faintly she came to lift her head
 For words—here is what she said:
 Once, when a child, I saw
 High in this mountain one mighty sign

Of Beauty: In the mountain-spine
 Was fastened an eagle's claw;
 High overhead for sure
 In yonder deep, sky-pure,
 Flashed a jewel like a Kohinur—
 Next I saw the eagle's eye
 Catch the flash like a mirror-spy
 Till now he too could see
 Into his bold eternity.

 Made I this thought: I shall go
 Yonder towards the snow,
 There where my clouds are high,
 Spotted in lilac dye,
 Where the heavy heavens blow
 Their breath into water-lily snow,
 There will I go,
 Follow my sign,
 My clutches in the mountain-spine,
 Not alone that I may see,
 But to climb to it so I come to be
 Part of all Beauty eternally.

This way I was bent that day
 I saw you just on the bridge below—
 There you tempted me to stay,
 To take your way of the world to go—
 Your shadow-world—remember how
 On the bridge I told you so,
 How you could only see
 Shadows, just the shadow of me
 For not a wisp of reality?
 This way I came to climb
 To this point sublime
 Of my marriage fire and rime.

The Man Militant

Gone is the most of me—
 How body has sickened,
 Eyelight thickened
 And you have only the ghost of me!—
 As much just as you had then
 In the river, or even when
 You looked in my morning eyes
 To find me—I was not there
 For you to come to, for you to share
 In this one world by any-wise—
 More is my soul than you shall take
 In one life, more is at stake
 Than you should have me for your sake.

See how this body wears away
 To tingle and rest no more,
 Nothing to be again as before,
 Our pretty play-life, our April day,
 For see how I knew you then
 By love just, only for love,
 Yet soul knew wiser, said no,
 Never that way, never again
 By lip or cheek of your morning glow—
 Soul will have never enough,
 For how it widens each new day
 While my poor body shrinks away!

Here in this mountain I saw,
 From earth below,
 My Eagle Iron Stripes lash his claw,
 His broken beak against the snow
 Mastiff-fashion—there the sun
 Hurled threats like a monster myrmidon
 And he caught the fire-ball, never a sigh,

As there it lay,
Like a panther at bay,
Closeted in his locket-eye
For prisoner and peace—
What Kingdomy like one of these?

Now, I said, I will go
His way, make my way so
To perch among peaks, look down
On quasi-men, caterpillar-town
Of glue-thought, tapestried clown
To see them pick sweets
Out of honey-meats,
Live their life of gozzan and gown—
My way was hard—friend,
Hardest is easiest in the end;
Hard to live makes easy to die
If you get the loft of it loftily.

Here was a beautiful thing
Higher than earth I saw—
Sweet as a mandolin ring
Was a click of the eagle's claw,
Deep as a sky for light
Was the light in his eye I saw,
Vast as a God was the power
Of soul he was fighting for,
One tripod-grip on his tower
Of lonely immortal stone,
Heedless he of his dying hour
Where he must die alone.

Sudden I saw him leap
Straight above cop and toft

The Man Militant

Into rivulets of wind aloft,
Saw him plunge from deep to deep
Where moon-stripes tie the snow
Into fagots of sun-bow glow
To shoot violet and crimson so
I lost him—there he was gone,
Never to turn to the world again—
One was he with the orange rain
Of star-sparks, coral grain,
Where Beauty goes on and on.

Thus far you followed me true,
Far as this top of snow;
Farther than this you may not go,
For the way is not known to you,
The way I go beyond
Higher than worlds you see,
High as spirit is in me—
Once I was tied to earth,
Then I broke my ribbon-bond;
How could it count the knuckle-worth,
Your half-hearted toad-foot earth
And I look beyond and beyond?

Now you have come to see
Out yonder where I go,
You 'll find your way to follow me—
There 's the world for you to outgrow,
There 's Power to be overcome,
There 's more of you to be,
More of man-total sum
Of soul ere you come to me
The way I go, wholly out there
In the crocussy air—

There 's to reach and to be
More of you yet, more of me.

You have one soul to grow,
Body as well—you make your showing
Body-most, yet this is to know;
Body will reach its height,
So much elbow, so little might,
While soul will keep on growing—
Ah, but if you should not grow
Soul to a point of power
To dog the eagle-flight to tower
Beyond this pup-life of an hour,
What is there else that shall last
When the plump body is dust and past?

Up this mountain you fought your way
By storm-whistle, that 's to say
You made havoc against odds,
Against hand-buff of counter-Gods
To where I am, this highest peak
Of earth which a man may seek,
Yet, now you look to see,
You find only the shadow of me,
Just that, nothing more
Than what you saw in the Willowquiver,
My artistic mirror-river
You plunged in for my image from the shore.

Land of shadows—there you thought
You held me to your lip and cheek
To get my glow-touch, hear me speak,
And all the sweet while I was not—

The Man Militant

Here is no true reality,
Here you may not put claim to me,
Here is for strife to come to be
More and more of you soulfully,
That one day, one far off day,
Where the eagle and night-winds play,
You shall have greatened to see
And clasp the very soul of me.

All around I see
Beauty, where I am to be
Part of it—other voices
I can hear, they seem to sing
Soft as the rustle of a wing,
More than the robin-heart rejoices—
Sun-wonder, too, is there,
But not a yellow I ever saw
For joy in it, such bosom-glare
Of supersolar law
As puts my heart to spirit-glowing
Beyond all other human knowing.

Beauty 's about in catseye or blue
For you to make it one part of you,
One thing high-minded pure,
So, like all Beauty, to endure
Above wreckage, for see how the suns
Spit fire to belch like battle-guns
To hurl their blow of thunder-stroke
In clouds for puffs of after-smoke,
Yet over the havoc-plains
Where world against world rushes,
Fire eats, chaos crushes,
Beauty ever remains and remains!

This is for you to see
 How, as I come to be
 Shadow and human littlety,
 I gather other sight and power,
 Moon-spaces, rainbow dower,
 And there is evermore more of me,
 Spirit which you may not see,
 My true ripe reality
 For you to follow
 Through pitfall path, sleepy hollow,
 To gather force and Beauty
 By deep endurance, drastic duty—
 There 's your only worth-while booty.

Will you once think me severe,
 Caring the less for you, dear,
 More thoughtful than heartfelt?—have not a fear,
 Since we are bound together
 As the iris and its feather,
 While there 's always a way
 In this universe-play
 Of Power and Beauty and Life
 To make sky-bows out of storm and strife—
 One day, hold to it sure,
 I shall have you for higher and truer
 Than the stars are to endure!

A BACHELOR

My wife!—There 's the thought I think
As I front my fire my evening way,
Watch the embers blossom and sink,
Dodge the sparks in their battle-play!
What would she seem like or be
Once she were here by the side of me?

My wife!—how the sweet word sings
Just as a linnet bubbles his note
And the empty cloister rings
Like chime in a silver throat!—
What may I seem like or be
To her should she try to think of me?

Her footfall I thought I could tell
Each year I waited, as if I heard
The clapping of a holiday-bell
One morning breeze had stirred
As I listened, tried to con,
And, lo, it was always lost and gone!

In at the cinders I gaze—
Once there was power there which took a turn
At glittering or empty blaze
Till nought now is left of them to burn,
Only one constantest glow,
Which is the last best of them to go.

So many evenings went and came,
The stars outside and my firefly-sparks
In my chamber grate sparkle just the same,
All only flocks of dying charks—
Still one thing the stars point clear:
She fills my soul, yet is nowhere near.

So well I can see her now,
Her way she would sit to look to me
Under the fine peaceful brow
As if she were trying to see
My deepmost thought just to know
If my love could fail her ever or go.

Then she would point—"Your book there
Says man is here just to do his best,
That life is nothing without a care,
While to fight your way is blest:
Tell me what under the sun
Counts it all after all is done!"

To which I would say: "Know this thing,
Man is not noblest to count his gain,
Since there 's other higher reckoning
Puts this one truth to him wisdom-plain:
Better he go conquering
To do his best just for love of the thing!

"Never you mind for the end,
For soul knows how each heart is safe
By keeping to this high truth for friend,
Nor need to whimper or chafe:
Who dares his noblest shall grow
Soul-shape—what nobler 's to hope or know?

A Bachelor

“For soul may not die since I see
 Change among worlds, while all the same
 Beauty is there eternally
 By star-balls in blue and yellow flame—
 By so much more is it true
 Of that which makes for Beauty in you.

“Is what I may see or touch
 My spirit-best? Is the light I prize
 For foremost or mightily much
 Just this strip of sun which kindles eyes,
 Or is it that light which leaps
 From soul in me of bodiless deeps?”

Then she would draw so near
 I should hold her close—one thought would be
 How more than all the world she was dear,
 Yet herself just and no part of me—
 There 's the lip and bosom-start
 And blue-vein-screen to keep us apart.

Then she would ask if I thought
 Our souls do make for mightier place
 And circumstance, to crumble not,
 Some growing outside of worlds and space—
 Ask of yourself, I would say,
 Ask the soul in you at its wonder-play!

Such evenings would come and go,
 Her talk to me and my talk to her,
 Each ember in turn would glisten to go,
 Only her heart, by a little stir,
 To mind us we were in life,
 One heart for me and my blessing-wife.

Never she came to me yet,
For here is this flesh to hold us apart,
One stubbornest wall of osselet
Prisons both soul and heart,
Each such evening to come and go
While I learn to love and value her so,

And you think we 're not to meet,
This heart of mine and her climbing hand,
That life is only final defeat
And there is no fine other loftier land
But serves a purpose to cheat
My spirit out of its life complete!

Have it so, if that make good!
Yet we shall fathom it, you and I,
Which makes for most, knuckle or mood—
Who ever saw a spirit die?
There now in such an undertone
I think while I nurse my heart alone

At my fire my evening way,
To wonder if I shall ever know
Her rose-face or dimple-play
Or gentle touch before I must go,
Or what she would seem like or be
Once she were here by the side of me.

IN THE OVERWORLD

WHAT am I doing
Not to be wooing
Now stars are out about such night above,
Moon-tracks and lavender enough
To coax me till I love
Such clinging light,
Such perfect night?

Yonder is the moon
In a barracoon
Of cloud, like a pretty face is veiled
Lest I shall see the cheek has paled,
Yonder dimpled moon
Which makes high noon
Of this night of June!

Oh, the stars in flocks,
In pompadour locks,
To hold me fast till truly I am fastened
Where worlds are melt, fields are glassened,
To love their wondrous ways,
Their olive rays,
Their endless days!

How I hug their light
Never out of sight
Save here among us in this pimple earth
Where darkness has a kind of worth,

While so I look to see
 Their look to me,
 Their way they flee.

What clusters of suns
 Where Hercules runs
 To Kingdom, and no end of him in sight,
 Made his way high by force of might
 As if to point me true
 My way to do
 To rise there too!

Now for the round blue
 Of high heaven in view,
 For worlds in place like little spots of gold
 To tempt me up to get my hold
 That I may leap my way
 Above their clay,
 Beyond their day,

As now I may see
 Where my Rosalie
 Keeps to all place, and her thought is wide
 As the stars are and sky beside,
 While so I look for her
 Where the eons stir
 Nor pause nor err.

Was she not beautiful
 Of soul and dutiful
 To what in the world makes for fine and right,
 Like as her stars in yonder night
 Make for power to last
 By the light they cast
 Into lightless vast?

In the Overworld

Therefore will I woo
All the overblue,
Moons and suns and spaces beyond end,
To have my love, to keep my friend,
For was she not more than they
With their cooling ray
In their pot of clay?

Royalty will I woo,
All the gold and blue,
Since part they were of her young soul sublime
Which I shall have to all new time,
For 'though the sun is set,
'Though the sky be jet,
Yet I have her yet.

•

A JAPANESE WAR CLAIM

MOTHER and son, son and mother,
Each to each like a single heart,
Each in this war-world knew not another
Love-touch nor friendly art
Where they lived, where they loved together
In a lap of meadow-patch
Under their canopy of thatch
For truce to wind and weather.

Between them, mother and son,
Such love was there, so blended,
We knew it never was begun,
Never could be ended.
Each for the other lived to do
Heartful most that could be done,
Till all the neighbor-people grew
To love the mother and her son.

Jap and Cossack were come to knives—
Look there now for one Godlike way
To settle it, take your pay
In blood, teeth, wealth of lives!
Each village put up a lick of smoke
To curl like an ivy about the air,
Now trip-hammer and anvil broke
Ploughshare into sword to spare

A Japanese War Claim

Not a life—there 's the noble way
Of killing to convince:
Is there doubt about what he should pay?
Oh, well, chop him into mince!
Brother or brother not,
Small matter so you deem
Your butcher-knife best to teach him what
Soul-size is—just a world-power dream!

Our Mikado must have men!
Enough said! There they come,
Diapason of pipe and drum
To ring the old lie over again
How the strongest is he who can kill,
Gold to the front, bludgeon-skill
For power to teach the weak
'T is wisdom to be meek.

The son is called. What is to do
But draw his sword, soul and might,
Whip a neighbor's nostrils blue
By murder, now he 's ordered to,
To put his country in the right!
Pick the logic out of that,
Pick the little pita-pat
Of soul, what would starve a gnat!

But stop! Here 's for pause
At one of such cute Battle-laws
Love makes—how eyes dartle, heart jumps
If love put nations to their trumps!
For when they found there was no other
Than the son to stay the widow-mother,
"What matter if it please or ache him,
By the law's law we may not take him."

So handed he his sword to his chief,
 Then away home, 'twixt joy and grief,
 To tell her who waited him there
 How she was a nation's care
 As well as his own. Night was on,
 A red moon in a black cloud shone
 Now he told her he could not go
 To battle since the law was so

He could not leave her and none
 Save him in her years to lean upon.
 One deep sigh the mother drew,
 Then thus came her words she spoke:
 "My son, 't were better they take us two
 Than we run our neck in the Russian yoke;
 There 's the one way, God's will,
 To settle it—there 's to strike and kill!

"You shall go—trust me for that!
 Glory comes out of a country's cause!
 Here 's not a time for puling laws,
 Gynecocracy, Caveat!
 There are men to kill, there 's honor to save—
 What matters one more tiny grave?
 Would you stop to think of death?
 Think of this, life is a breath

"Of nothing more than thin air;
 Now here it is, now there,
 Now I have it, then he
 Who shall come after me,
 While soul is all, is everywhere,
 Loses nothing, is not lost,
 Stops never to count the cost
 Of truth 'though life be tempest-tost,

A Japanese War Claim

“And truth is we must build power
To kill the Cossack, to pin his face
For laughing-stock in our market-place
’Though life be cut down in morning flower.
There ’s your one way to make Right,
Kill the Cossack, strike so you kill
For God’s law, by God’s will—
The soul of the world is Might.”

Such made her whole thought indeed!
Shall man do noblier than his creed?
Believing so in her Psalm
Of Life that Death holds mighty charm
If put to good as you see it,
If or no such truly be it,
Sudden as sudden thought
Which comes and goes and scarce is caught

She whipped a dagger out of her belt,
Then deep into her heart
As if the blow had not been felt—
Scarce a breath was left her to part
With him she loved, now she put the knife
Fast in his hand, bade him go,
Now he was free, strike the Cossack so,
Blow for blow, a life for a life!

IMPROMPTU

I

IN a naked broom-rape field
Free I wandered one full day
Of sun-wash, blossom-yield,
To nowhere, to have my way
To go free, build castles,
Wear thistle-pink, corn-tassels,
Body-bound, free of thought,
So was I master in my lot
Of touch-me-not.

II

Harked I for a cat-bird call,
Chipmunk-leap
And chatter in a wall;
Little I have which I may keep
Of what is crest
If a summer day be not enough
And the whole high sky be manifest
Of more and better and best
Just about me, just above;

III

For, thought I, as I wandered,
Is life to be choked or squandered

Impromptu

If I hold so much of thought as can clasp
 A universe in my little grasp?
 Am I for fact so small?
 More likely much that I am all,
 While what I see around,
 Star-fields or pretty pebble-ground
 Only in my soul are found!

IV

More of me there was
 That fine Tuesday than I could tell,
 Lapwing fancy which knits and gnaws
 Beyond my day-in-day-out spell
 Of chipmunk or 'cockerel,
 Power of heart to clutch
 More than life offers overmuch—
 So was I musing
 To wonder what a game for losing

V

Life is—when, just in the breach
 Beyond me, well out of my reach,
 But my way coming, was such a lass,
 Ivy about her neck and arm,
 Cheek like an apple-garden has,
 Sundew crowded into each palm
 She held up as if to commend
 The flower to a wren, beg him descend
 To perch there to be her friend.

VI

You 've seen a pink rose swing
 In sun-vine till you thought

The wild beautiful thing
 Danced and dangled to be caught,
 To be coddled and stroked and kissed
 So not a lip of it should be missed—
 Well, there she was and close,
 All the pink dance of one of those,
 And what else other than such a rose?

VII

What was for me to do?
 Will you stop to reason what
 Makes wisdom, cook up cold thought
 To cipher at why, why not,
 Now Heaven drops Heaven to you?
 Coming my way was she,
 That near now for me to see
 What soul nested in each eye
 Of sweet Heaven, all the same blue dye,

VIII

As if once to let me know
 Beauty was there like sky, the such
 As lay beyond my thought or touch—
 What now?—should I let her go,
 Never to see her more by chance
 In this world of losing circumstance?—
 Or stop to think?—who may think
 When love is there at a wink,
 While thought is tied in the iron link?

IX

Only the one narrow path was there
 From which I stepped to let her pass

Impromptu

Like a loaded blossom in the grass
So uncomputed fair,
When—now every thought put under
Save love, which never made a blunder,
Quicker than I could count her charms
I had her cheeks in these palms,
Her heart in my arms,

X

Those two lips, not meant to miss,
Protesting, but sure of this
Wonderful stolen kiss after kiss—
And then, only after then,
Now she was put free again,
Could I see each pale cheek
Mantle red like an evening cloud
The sun has touched and left, try to speak
Their language, so silent-loud!

XI

I thought of what I gained or missed:
One girl more had been loved and kissed
Whether she would or no;
Was I more man for it, a bee-bob more
Than ever before,
Now she turned and I could see
Her pity-like look to me
As if to say: "You are small,
You see skin-deep, that is all,

XII

"Most as any fly might light
On the bosom of a brook

For just his one tiny bite
 Of dew, never a look
 Into the mirror in his brook
 Where giant skies and moon-worlds nook.—
 Keep to it, have your way
 Of potter to putter in the clay
 Your little day,

XIII

“But know, my friend, Beauty is what
 Beauty makes it to a dot;
 Put touch to a rose to jar
 A leaf of it, you leave your scar;
 Who save the fool would claw
 The heart out of what he hungers for?
 Keep to crocodile or bat
 If such be the thing you level at!
 I thought the God in you more than that.”

DEVERSORIUM VIATORIS HIEROSOLYMAM PRO-
FICISCENTIS¹

HERE I lay me to-night—
See, how dark the hour is,
This tomb, where not a flower is
Nor rood in sight
To point a path^uout, so long the way is
To where I look and only day is,
And I must say good-night.

Here will I fall asleep
To put my burden down
Which prompted no pout nor frown
That I would keep,
Since one night only hails me at an inn
I'm glad of to find such shelter in,
Now I must look to sleep.

I put my trinkets here,
The what I did or knew
For best, what I thought good to do
By gloom, by cheer,
For knowing I will need them one new day
Of a finer light, of a wider way,
And so I put them here.

¹ The inn of a traveller on his way to Jerusalem.—From an English Tomb.

Soul comes and goes, my friend;
You see it last and first;
Not a God's newt can be curst
And there an end
Of endless Power, and the no-ending whole
Put plainest deep in your very soul
Not to misapprehend.

This hand will wither so
As you see in your sun
Now its worst first work is done
And best, although
Think you I shall get me no finer hand
Than this which is baked of sun and sand
Now that I sleep to grow?

Slowly, then, bell and bell,
Seeing I seek release
From foment to make my ease;
One evening knell
Before I nod, now death hath struck the hour
That I am to grasp for more of Power
Which doeth all things well.

There, so, make low the light
To gather me to bed,
Now all has been done and said
Of wrong or right
Which was my best—I'm sure it was my best—
So leave me here for a little rest,
Since I must say good-night.

HER DUKE

SUCH a sky-boon was this day
In the last of May,
Cinderella birds just about
At their cymbal-shout,
Little sunburnt flowers at their feat
To be like you, skyful and sweet—
Bob-lights played in the leaves
Which kicked the sun off like copper greaves—
Leveret and pianet
I could not forget—
Such a noble day it was
For a noble cause!

You had your two sides to you
Like the rest of us;
One was weak, the other grew
So the best of us
Could not in one life struggle to
One half the spirit size of you.
Remember how you would tell me all
You did or thought, mighty or small,
How you thought your way was best,
Yet would look to me

To put you to the test?
Let us look to see:

You were fine as a leaf of spring,
As the April ring
Of little pellets of rain
At your window-pane;
You were beautiful, such kind of grace
Summer puts in evening skies;
Sun-pink played in your face,
Soul was ripe in your eyes
With their pond-look of iris dyes—
That day, that perfect day,
Came my turn to say
You were beautiful as none
All under the sun!

Now he was your pewter Duke,
Had his helmet-look,
This man was you thought of so
For his nickel glow,
His chin-shine and family stock,
His new gold harness, feathers for puff,
Just the plain man in him not enough
To hold you under key and lock,
And so he dangled for show,
Played the glow-worm so
You should unspirit and crawl
To his pomp and call.

I only loved you the way,
That fine day of May,
Rocket flowers reach for their sun
Since the world begun;

Her Duke

Loved you, yet took not one thought
How you were to be snared and got,
Made my way to you as the wren
Makes his way to his sky again,
And nothing to ask of you
But you love me too
For my sake, not for my troops
Of buttons and loops.

But he was your Duke I saw
You were aiming for;
Kept his kick and bubble-front
To which he was wont;
Took you by storm by his way
Of trick-master for tall display,
The while you so overlooked me
I forgot I was meant to be!
You liked his helmet and sword,
Drank each look and word—
I saw you flutter to quob
Like a muffled squab.

But how much love did you have
For his star or staff,
Or how much heart could you show
For his lemon bow?
Never you housed a knuckle of care
Save for the pomp-look which was there
In his crocodile eyes, peacock blue,
To handicap the heart in you!
Now that you had him to hold
By his hand of gold,
What could it matter the dot
If you loved him or not?

Next came, as I said, one day
In the month of May,
Full of quince blossom and stock
For you to unlock—
You were up about fields to see
What in the world was come to me
Who had not seen you for many days,
Had left you to your Duke and his praise,
Which seemed to be all enough
Without my love,
While so I thought I must do
My best without you,

When—that clean May morning we stood
By your crab-apple wood
You wore one look I could read,
Had a heart in need,
Yet you would not own to it, but told
Of your Duke and his gold,
Of his place in the world for power
To make men snivel and cower—
Your Duke and his power and all,
While I was too small
To fill the dream in your thought,
Cast in with your lot.

So I could see you thought his power,
His splurge of an hour,
Were more than all I could be
By the soul in me;
More than my kingdom of heart
Were the tricks of his art,
Quite as all light-winded nothing
Makes much out of nothing—

Her Duke

So I was to drop behind
In your soul and mind,
Follow on at the fag end,
Play brotherly friend!

How comes it men think of this
For the best there is:
Power and wealth and brain and art,
So little of heart,
As if the world held more, as a whole,
Than this sun-above masterful soul,
Or could give a man half what he wants
In these pigeon-hole haunts,
While so, as life leaps agog,
Play groundling and hog,
Drink of mere smother of smut,
Make much of a gut?

Well—that clean morning of May,
As I tried to say,
Both of us thought as we stood
By your crab-apple wood—
I only thought of my honest love
For you, that for me was enough,
While you made effort to soar above
Heart and soul and the reign of love
When I turned, as this much I said:

“Since your love is dead,
There ’s only my sigh to tell
My hardest word of all—Farewell!
So I leave you to your Duke
With his helmet-look!

I take to my way of life,
Nor thought of a wife,
Only your image I have to keep

“Till I come to where I mean to sleep—
What if things are not what they seem,
Then is this life only a dream
And I sleep, always I sleep,
By which way I keep
To what things only seem,
And always I dream!”

But what was told in your eyes
By their strong surprise?
How now did you try to speak
And the lip was weak!
Your two cheeks were knitted to quilt
White spots, as if blood had been spilt—
I saw the knife was up to the hilt!
I did not seem to you then so small
Once you could see how the heart is all,
My heart which you took,
And never one thought nor look
To your stupid Duke!

Pleasant days, dear, after all,
As I now recall,
Days for learning what is best,
Souls put to the test
To see, by all which has gone before,
Soul is meant to be vastways more
To such Beauty and no end
As you nor I may try to portend,

Her Duke

And so I like to recall,
In the midst of it all,
Those pleasant days as I look
Back to you and your Duke!

HALO SKIMP

I

LET us have a look at Skimp
From a point of view
Of his halt, of his limp,
Of his bugaboo,
His three faces: Priest-apostle look,
Warmth enough in it just to cook
Authority of the pot-hook look;
His pew-face, long and narrow,
About the broadhead of a sparrow,
Save what he lacks in chin
Is made up to him in bull-wolf mouth
To take a whole harvest in,
Yield you a season of drouth;
His every-day face of fashion
Full of the Skimp family passion
To narrow things to so and so—
Above and beyond you must not go
Or God might envy you what you know—
Glue-ball, the people would say,
To watch him strut across the way
So rapt in such ego-swim
Men thought the stars might stick to him—
There at a gnat-hole he would pick
To fetch truth a left-handed lick
Under such wide sombrero-brim
As kept the sky-width away from him.

Halo Skimp

Most anything he managed to do
 To smallen him, to smallen you
 To his one narrow nose-end view.

II

Truth is written in a book,
 You must take the thing for such,
 Not a wink at it to look
 If an ephod argue much,
 Or a priest and his bugbear-touch—
 Truth is all a little thing
 Measured by a little skull,
 Man is meant to beg and cling,
 Keep his wits about him dull,
 Meant for priests to kick and gull—
 God is in his lightning-sky,
 Thunderbolts to smash a race,
 You for pin-worm, he for high,
 For spider in his hiding-place
 To bite men out of time and space—
 God is mighty to be pleased,
 Has a way of sucking blood,
 Perfect Power must be appeased
 By tears of human widowhood,
 There's the top notch of all good—
 Truth is all a little thing,
 Here the preface, here the end
 Of any other reasoning
 Than man is meant to quob and bend
 To Power so to not offend—
 Nothing lies beyond to know,
 I must fetch my altar-bow,
 Take their way to come and go,
 And Skimp shall show me how!

III

Halo Skimp!—think the while how
Halo for glory rounded his brow!
You would be looking for lustre
Of an infinite star-cluster
'Round such dog-thought—no blunder
Is this whimpering to crouch under—
No blunder is this pig-ankle plan
That nothing comes of being man,
Since Skimp has another trick up sleeve:
You must knock under, must believe
Just the thing Skimp has up sleeve
To get your footing without a limp,
Get the whole benefit of Skimp.
Could you doubt of his length of view,
His power to see what is truly true
Now he looks back a thousand years
To get his croppie full of fears?
There now came his hook-hawk eye
Seeing straight-wise what he saw,
His Heaven for him to be gulping for
With the mouth-parts of a dragon-fly.
Skimp knew—man is to be so much,
More than this is out of clutch
And Skimp could show you the outer touch.
Once I heard him lesson a boy
How the Devil is forward, how God is coy,
While first above all things first
He shall practise hunger and thirst,
Cultivate general deprivation,
Since God is open to negotiation,
His high Heaven to be bought
By flatulence and pauper-thought.

IV

Skimp—now, Skimp, I heard you pray
Like a Ute Indian one day
For good and greatness to come your way—
Did there not once come to you
How goodness and greatness are what you do,
How you are not to be stuffed, hog-bellied,
Each desire to be sugar jellied,
But just your fist first to strike to do
So God might get somewhat out of you?
But, Skimp—I heard you shouting praise
That day, heard your windy ways
At pipery, your noisy phase—
Then I looked for the other part,
Love in it—there went no heart
In your mouth-practice or keyboard art.
Nobler than worship love is and finer,
More human and vastly diviner.
Beside, here's an odd thing, Skimp:
I'm no kind of mocking imp
To take your shape, follow your gong,
Dip and mumble with the throng,
For there's the unique God in me
I'm to come to, grow to be,
Never breath of subserviency,
None of your altar-tricks, not a nod
To put me leaning upon God,
For how may I lean and stand straight,
Partways small, partways great?—
I for one masterpiece of thought
That what I do shall be noblest wrought
Of the best of me, of the most of me,
Of the wholly holy ghost of me

For virtue, kindliness, endurance-power
 To stand man-foremost up to the hour
That strikes for me—noblest behavior,
 Man his own God and only Savior
By being the God-most man,
 All the best of him he can
For love of it to stand manful-straight
 For greatness in him to stay great
As a God could stay in one narrow sphere,
 Never an atomful of fear
For homage—just human love
 Is complete worship and homage enough,
Never a thumb-twitch or nod,
 Each man one giantest gentlest God.
In the afterward or here
 What has the man to fear,
Be the heart of him true and kind,
 He his best to be striving at
In spite of his world he leaves behind?—
 What may a God do more than that?

OLD DARBY

How well I remember this man,
His Pawtucket Street stride,
Hand open wide
As a griddle-pan!
At first I shied him,
The boy-tribe guyed him,
Women folk eyed him,
Eyed his blue great eyes,
His boot-black tie,
His long look to the skies
Like a longing to fly,
Hat on and off,
His little cough,
His sorrow-sigh!

None feared him, none knew him who he was,
Only Old Darby was his name,
His purpose to make common cause
With hard-luck people—that way he came
To be known for his majesty part
He played, his mighty human heart.

Snug in his Chelmsford woods,
In his bee-flower house,
His hut of willow snoods,
Of wild forest goods,

To an owl for a friend
 His hand to extend,
 Swallows of nard
 In his forest yard,
 A whole heart to share
 His handful-fare
 With the birds in air,
 He now, like each flower
 In his dusty-miller bower,
 Was a prince of power.

Once I went to watch him in his den
 He built to be away from men:
 It was one evening, April-colored,
 All sky grew droopy to half dullard
 To see him at his berries and crust
 Doing his best at it to adjust
 Soul and body so he could stay
 To stay others yet another day.
 I could hear his heart thump thought
 For what he knew of the sorrow-lot
 Of men he knew never, scarce heard of,
 While as to himself never a word of
 Nor thought of him to find any fault,
 No whimpering at the world's assault
 And he part of the gold-eyed vault
 Of Heaven. Meal over, I saw him go
 Sudden rapid-wise to and fro
 Before his hut like he were thinking
 And aching, too, clean through him
 —Never any flinching nor shrinking—
 One would think somewhat was due him
 More than this world could give—there he drew
 One locket from his breast, kissed it through,

Old Darby

Held it to his lips, held his two eyes
So fastened on the zenith skies
As an eagle looks before he flies,
I would not have wondered to see him rise.

Old Darby—yet not old,
Fifty, may be, and yet
His face had many a fold,
There were the chink and fret
And no power to forget
What had grooved them so,
Each heavy chisel-blow,
He bent by such weight
Of his loaded fate
He looked and men thought,
Whether he was or not,
He must be heavy fraught
With years, and so 't was told
He was passing old.

Prime abject wonder was it to see
His love he kept for the locket-face
He carried in such captivity
None ever knew how his soul was a place
For just the one sweet woman-face
He would kiss so, looking to the skies,
Looking straight into endless deeps
To see how Beauty never dies
Where each world noddles and blinks and sleeps,
As if for certain surpassing fair
He must find her another day out there!

Now I must tell you this,
To make the matter plain

About the girl and kiss,
About the locket-chain,
Which mystery was his
He kept so most men thought
He must be mad or wild—
Whether pleased or not,
He neither scowled nor smiled,
Kept his calm same way
From moon to moon—at last
This truth leaked out one day
To put the world aghast:

Darby and Duke were two brothers called—
Duke, the older and world of a boy,
By birth came somehow pinched and smalled
In soul, compounded cheap alloy,
Was his father's image and toy,
His pet luckling straightway from birth,
His son and heir and struggle-worth
To take both family fortune and name,
Natured to take whatever came
His way, so wholly the father like,
Gulp and gullet of a pike
For himself just and no other,
He the one headlong grasping brother.
Darby was of the other mould,
Never was in him greed of gold
Nor any greed; always he chewed
Thought to see what mortal good
In the world he could be to do
Anything for me or you,
Any goodness he could do,
So little to himself it mattered
If fortune flooded or only spattered.

Old Darby

Had he taken to the dollar-plan
 Of more dollars to make more man,
 The father had counted him worthy
 To be his son, rich and earthy.
 But no, he was higher spirit-mood,
 Not thinking of himself for gain,
 But only to do what best he could,
 While so his way in the world was plain:

To be kind and true
 As a day is long,
 All a will to do,
 All a foe to wrong,
 Love of truth and power
 To be free and great
 As an arum-flower
 In the perfect state,
 As an April shower
 With its diamond trait,
 Not to mind of death
 Or the way you drop,
 Never soul nor breath
 Taking flight to stop
 On the wing to do—
 There 's the God in you!

In youth the two brothers at one time
 Fell to loving the one girl
 Of an eye of supra-mortal pearl,
 Voice of such holiday chime,
 One pure girl of such sun-wide hope
 Shadows died in her horoscope,
 Thought-happy, and so much was of her
 There was only to wholly love her,

As Darby did, likewise did Duke;
Each one his proper Monday took
To himself, so each one never knew
The other brother loved her too,
Till one day it happened, who knows how,
Each pledged her his solemn love and vow,
While there her eyes were opened to choose,
One brother to take, the other to lose!

Said Darby to Duke:
You see how it is,
Now you stop to look!
I was born to miss
My portion in life,
I was put to the strife,
I was sent to the front
To take butt and brunt,
And the way is long—
My luck I am strong
Just to step aside—
You take her for bride,
I leave her to you,
There 's my best I can do!

Duke took her, you be sure of that,
Took his father's fortune, all there was
Was left him to gnaw and grovel at,
Nor took he another human cause
Than just himself to be living for
For what he could get, for all there was,
Never the thought of any other,
Nor heed of the stript and generous brother,
As on he went to get this world's most,
Nor counted it what the other lost.

Old Darby

Darby, per contra, took nobler view
Of what is fine in the soul to do
So he should get the finest he was,
Get above skunk and cat-lick laws
To nobler and highmost man,
Over and above any worldsome plan,
So gave the girl to his brother Duke,
Thought nothing of it only to do
His kindest and noblest way he knew,
The one way ever he saw and took.
That way Duke came to get his prize
Of gold and such immortal eyes
And soul of a girl as never I saw
So worth a man's living and dying for.
Duke took her, left Darby to go
His way, his land-long way alone,
Nor gave him one thought now he was gone,
The sting in him like an arrow
Levelled in the heart and marrow
He carried there, nor knew ever how
She half way loved him, thought of him so
Now she saw him turn to go
To leave her to his brother Duke,
Saw the kind face, longing look
He gave her that day he went,
As light drops out of a firmament.

One hard way to go,
One hard thing to do,
Never a way to know
Of the cost to you
And you carry through
What you mean to do
For the good in you,

For the good in view,
 Nor a gain to gain
 Nor a hope to hope
 But the plain way plain
 For such noble scope
 As is strong and true—
 There 's the God in you!

How things went with Duke let us see:
 Just the same Duke he was, never so
 Men saw in him any human glow
 Or little spot of divinity,
 But Duke just, wholly hog-eyed Duke,
 The inward, never the outward look
 About him in the world for others,
 His many heavy-hearted brothers
 To give a hand to if he could
 Be of some little human good.
 His noble pearl-girl too, she could see
 Now so plain how her man-mate was
 All self-sided as savagery,
 Saw him for mostly brawn, or jaws
 To swallow, to give nothing out,
 So she grew to nursing her doubt
 Of her love of him—Darby was now
 In her thought with his heartfullest vow;
 She could see him, 'though she never knew
 Which way in all the world he flew
 When he left her to his brother to take—
 What love will do for its own fine sake!
 Fairly at last she grew to love him,
 The whole world held nought above him,
 Poor Darby, and he gone forever
 —She knew time takes back step never—

Old Darby

Whatever came of him none ever knew,
 What lot fell to him none ever cared;
 He may have flown where the eagles flew
 To tie to their scaur, fare as they fared,
 While who in the green world sniffed or cared
 Save her who knew his widest heart,
 Monument greatness, his majesty part
 He played, while men went thinking him odd,
 And he a whole Prince and part of God!

What have you to fear
 In the God-wide world
 If love drop a tear
 So the cheek be pearled—
 If the dark spread wing
 In that heart of thine
 So the night-larks sing,
 So the planets shine—
 If the way be rough
 In your meadow-spread,
 So you live by love
 Of the heights ahead
 For the good in view,
 For the God in you?

So it was in Chelmsford I found him,
 At the fag-end, in his squirrel-hut!
 How each tempest tried to unground him!
 I saw his wide eyes open and shut
 As if the soul in him watched each gape
 To leap there for chance to escape.
 Much was to think of him, nothing to know
 As he would sit in the evening glow,
 Each bird about him leaping to share

His lap, a crumb of his evening fare
 In the sweet kind quiet there was there.
 Each day he took to this way or that way,
 Now to watch a yellow chat play
 Pæans to him—I thought that morning
 The very soul of song was dawning—
 Then to his task in Pawtucket Street,
 To do and to do, and a world in need
 Of each man, to his head and feet—
 I could see him at a garden weed
 To help a melon grow, take his turn
 To watch a bee in a clover churn,
 To show a child the God of him
 Leaped in every breath and limb
 To soar above the sod of him,
 Spoke kindness always and great truth:
 "Only soul has perpetual youth;
 The child is likelier God
 Than your small soul in your lordly pod,"
 And so on, as each way he went
 He preached of power by strugglement;
 Beauty was the thing to catch,
 New always, not made to match;
 Soul-foremost was the way to go,
 Would the world could see it so,
 And so on,

Such a true high man
 I watched him his way
 The organ-birds play
 Where his flower-fields ran,
 And he there to do
 What is lasting true,
 What is kindly great

Old Darby

As all sky holds blue
 Over dark and hate,
 Just to do his most
 In the world he could,
 Nor a thing to boast
 Only truelike mood,
 Only human good!

Duke died. Never he rose above
 His self-highway of self-love.
 So little truly there was of him
 The wife came lastly to unlove him.—
 Death took him—oft I wonder if
 Men die for not soul enough to live—
 She now alone in the world to think
 How life is barely the puff and wink,
 Yet long enough to so certainly do
 All which may lie in the soul in you
 To get greatness and the grandeur-view.
 Darby she loved, always she knew
 She loved him, yet away he was gone
 And none could tell in the world whereto,
 Yet to think of him wholly alone
 And none to smooth out his brow betimes,
 Drop bell-words to him for evening chimes,
 Was more than all her heart could endure—
 She must follow to see, to be sure
 If he were anywhere above ground—
 Had he not been most faithful found
 His hard long way in the world he went?
 This she knew by the goodness he meant,
 There he gave her up, never a quaver,
 So the lesser brother should have her.

So this then should be her forward-strife,
 Her masterstroke and work of her life,
 To find him—God only knows how
 Years went by and she kept her vow.

Tired heart and brain,
 Take a thought of this,
 June will come again,
 Life one purpose is
 And the meaning plain,
 You to strike to do
 For the June-Domain
 Of the God in you,
 Power to go your way,
 Power to be your best,
 Give the thought free play,
 Put you to the test
 To be bold and true—
 There 's the God in you!

On she wandered her way up and down
 Of every highway of every town,
 Found the nozzle of each by-way,
 Found the V-fork in each Y-way,
 Took to meadow-stretch, to low beaches
 Where the pursuing ocean reaches
 As if ever putting out a hand
 To cling to the lofty lover-land.
 High-hearted grew she, never ruing,
 Losing each day, each day pursuing,
 While what of her loss was worth the thought?—
 Should she not do her mightiest
 To put her to the touch and test
 Whether she won at it or not?

Old Darby

Say, friend, which were better you do,
 'Complish the end you have in view
 Or end by 'complishing soul in you?

Comes always a day
 Just after a night!
 See the star-points play
 Their fountains of light
 In back of each cloud
 So you may not see
 How they prick the shroud
 Of eternity!
 There 's a way to be,
 There 's a thing to do
 All by you or me
 And no prize in view
 But the fine high man
 To be all he can.

One morning came of such bright new sun
 Men thought the day must be overrun
 By a rush of blush against the sky,
 As if the cheek wore a pretty dye
 Of scarlet in lapis lazuli.
 Darby was up among all his birds
 To catch their bell-whistle, watch their cape
 Of lemon on the head and nape,
 To learn their song of unworldly words
 Nor let a leaf of it escape.
 Backward and forward his way he went,
 Each ear cocked out, each eye intent
 To see what all God-like nature meant
 By putting so much more before man
 Than he may think of to try to span,

Unless, i' faith, to point him always before
To what he may come to—better and more.
Right now as he was thinking that way,
He took to kissing the locket-face,
Looking to skyward much as to say:
“In yonder worlds there 's abounding place,
And I shall have you another day,”
When—such a voice out of his trees
Caught his soul up, brought whip-poor-will
And tree-finch to sudden still,
Such sweet note in it as a breeze
Of August plays in a mellow plant,
Lilted to trill like a pretty chant
To take him between throb and pant
So mightily he scarce could control
Neck enough to turn him to see
Who spoke so like a singing soul,
What the meaning of it could be.

Love comes and who knows
How it came to-day
Like a jasper rose
In the winds of May,
So you never know
How it found you so,
Or you never guess
It was meant for you
By the world you bless
With the love you do,
And it comes your way
Like the rose will send
Its blossom-spray
To the warm wind-friend.

Could it be she had found him at last?
For there she stood in his cone-tree yard,
The life of each of them mostly past,
Each way which they took so long, so hard,
Yet now the sweet wild voice was at hand,
Was now at his ears like the April sun
Touches the top of a wintered land,
And the rich round purpose of love was done,
For there they were fast in the arms of each,
Lips tied to lips to play their part
Of open door to spirit and heart—
Love was now in sight and reach
All in spite of such ugly past,
For they were one in the world at last.

Something in Nature makes for Right,
Keeps always perfect Beauty in sight,
So help it along all your soul and might!

LOVE

SUCH a sprite is love,
Takes to lips at first;
Mouth is good enough,
Meant for quenching thirst—
Little later on
He will mount to cheek
For a chance to speak
After thirst is gone—
Next I see him rise
Where two lilac eyes
Hold him off apart
And he sees the heart—
There he stays for good
In his better mood!
Little later on
Years and years are gone,
Nothing more is there
Where he nested first
With his crop of thirst;
Mouth and cheek are bare
Of phlozen glare,
Passion-stare,
Eyes to drop a look
Like a fingered book
With the covers worn,
Pages torn,

As at last he reads
 What all spirit needs:
Over brow and brink
 I see soul, I think,
Past the passing wink!

LITTLE SILVER

By the lake's light
 Out of my leghorn wood
Of moon-brushes where the kite
 Stroked his feathers, wooed,
Played his weather-note,
 We were girl and boy
In the days I quote,
 Each heart aimed at joy
That filled the throat—
 Children we at our games
In our popple-wood,
 Called the flowers their names,
Called the cow-fields good,
 Tumbled in any grass
Which was high and green
 To let the kildee pass
And we not to be seen,
 So he should drop to light
Close in touch and sight
 To lift his tune
Such a summer night,
 Such a day of June.

You know the children's ways,
 Any thought to do
As the wine-brush plays
 At a bath of dew

Little Silver

To drink in sun
From a morning hour
Till new colors run
And their bush is a flower!

Little silver hands he had,
My first childhood's lad;
Little silver locks, and too,
Eyes half silver, half blue
To look me through,
Made his way to me
By his look of trust,
By the deity
In such smallness just;
Would come to me to know
If bell-flowers grew
In the archipelago
Of sky-islands too!
Came such singing thought
Out of his tiny heart
My song-sparrow was caught
Trying to learn the part.

Once he asked to know
If the sky I see
Was a way to go,
Or a thing to be!
A thing to be, I said,
Never a way to go,
For there are your blue and red
In apple-green glow;
There is your height for you
To be climbing to;

Breadth too, and depth to grow
 To no end of it so;
 There is power which grows
 By the power it shows;

Beauty, too, which stays
 Beyond change of days—
 All this for you to be,
 Height, power, quiddity
 To no end, you to be it,
 Not to gulp nor flee it,
 Be all of all that is,
 Star-points, mighty precipice
 Up the sky, down the sky,
 All that is fine and high.

In our grape-field one day
 Fairly I heard him say:
 See how this purple plum
 Is deaf and dumb,
 Yet has sweet life, has plump,
 Knows a way too to pump
 Juice up out of earth
 To get the jelly-worth,
 Yet will it pause to die,
 Drop its hazel eye,
 Drop its belle-monte dye.

Ah, said I now,
 There 's the same new sweet
 In this evening sleet;
 There 's the over-brown brow
 In my evening cloud now;
 There 's the purple cheek

Little Silver

Tries to look and speak
 From yonder sky-ended peak—
The blue brow and fine strip
 Of vermilion lip,
All that was ever given
 To your plum, lies there in heaven.

So I think of him,
 Of his lofty whim,
Of his gurgling chaff,
 Little silver laugh,
For so I lost him there
 When his step was true,
When his heart was new,
 When his soul was fair.

He was meant for me,
 As I could know and see
By our way we leaped in tune
 That plump afternoon,
By our thought together
 As moon and weather,
By our fly-kite way
 We took to play
At the round orange sky
 To catch its morning eye,
Evening dye.
 On another day,
By another way,
 In another clay
I know he shall be found
 Somewhere in the all around,
The best of him, above ground.

Little Silver

341

But now I think of him,
 Little silver eye and limb,
To count for what is fair
 Beyond me, beyond compare
In the super-lunar air.
 Yonder, I think, so far
Above life, above here,
 Outside of hope or fear,
All out of this shock of jar
 Hangs my Little Silver Star!

TWINS

Two twin sisters were these two girls
 I tell you about,
So alike in chin-play and pout
 And cheek-side and curls
One could not tell them apart,
 Not if he looked forever in their heart.

Each took the one way of truing
 Her side-hair to make it obey,
Each took the other's way of doing
 What waited to be done each day—
Let us see what came to pass
 One morning in their one looking-glass!

In peace they lived to this day now
 I tell you about,
Tripped and sang happily in and out
 As girls know how,
So you would not find a day
 When they were not one in their bubbleplay,

For one was the other so you could see
 Not a difference by half a hair,
Each as the other grew for fair,
 So grew no cause for jealousy,
Both alike so in trim and mood
 One could not envy the other if she would.

Came now the lover, one true knight
 Of the village best,
To make his whole heart manifest
 Of a Christmas night—
Mark you now he never knew
 They were twins, so like each other too!

This night it chanced he never saw
 His love he hoped and hungered for,
For there her twin sister came
 Seeming like her so just the same
He could not know he should err,
 So poured his whole heartfelt out to her!

Next day came each sister to know
 She was quite as much
As the other was to see and touch,
 At least as men go,
Since one would answer as well
 As the other, far as men could tell.

So now this plan came fixed upon:
 Each one a different shape should take
By bodice, make up a different make,
 By shirt-waist one, each one to don
A new other kind of hat
 And spit-curl and cute cravat

To difference between the two,
 So a man could say
Which one of the two he saw that day,
 If white cap or blue—
So that way it came to pass
 One morning both stared in one looking-glass

To take an infinite bother,
Each to look different from the other,
When—lo, one caught the wish to look better,
To make her winsomer, rosetter,
While right there then their trouble began
Now each got in harness to catch a man.

Both jealousy and envy grew,
As surely you know
How positively it must be so
And the end in view
Be the one man to be got
At all hazard and whether or not.

One put a brighter spot to the cheek,
Touched up each dimple to make it speak,
While the other stood primping alias
So not to let one pin-shot pass
Which could put a man under fetter—
Anything to look other and better

Till each thought the other one grew
Handsome by far,
Both with no chance to be at par
Nor yet to outdo,
When sudden it chanced, alas,
They put the whole blame on the looking-glass!

Sooner than one could see,
Four small fists struck the mirror so
To rain such vengeance, blow on blow,
By such compunctioned enmity,
There went quick moments none could tell
Where under skies the mirror fell.

Next was set up between them this
 For cornerstone:
Each should see her young knight alone,
 As custom is,
By which way each one should think
 To play her best game of dimple and wink.

Once he came again, once he saw
 How two sisters contended for,
Not him so much, as in each case
 Each for the handsomer shape and face,
Each to tell him, as each did,
 The other stood cold as a pyramid,

Lacked Beauty, lacked noble blend
 Of elbow and joist,
Was dozzled, was too pipingly voiced
 To be perfect friend—
Once he saw their way they talked,
 How neither purposed to be balked,

Each by her pretty fling and pout
 Bound to crowd the other out,
There he rounded him up to know
 They were still twins, like each other so
In snap and bite and sulky smother,
 He would not one girl or the other!

HELL

All well done,
Napoleon?
Scarcely that! Not so well done!
War 's severe,
Souls are dear;
There 's no wisdom in a gun.
Better things not so well done,
Not so much of Napoleon!

I

DRUM-TICKS and gun-puffs to your war,
And you proud of it
Who scarce know what you are fighting for!—
You love the loud of it,
Boom-bombast of bassoon,
Trumpet march in rigadoon,
High pipery of shalms
To your blazonry of arms,
Bold piletus in the air
To stab, what matters where,
So you kill your brave brothers there!

II

Fire-balls to the fore!
They 've a pretty light
To keep the killing-trick in sight
For another age or more—

Blood-letting to let you know
Truth triumphs by an overflow
Of guts in an open field,
Your geniusing to teach men to yield
To just your view of right,
So out with a claw to strike on sight
As pumas do—hate and fight!

III

Your fingers in his throat
For love of God,
Streak his blood up the citron sod
So you may glutton and bloat!
Or was it a new dispute
Brought you to knuckles of lead,
Made you scorpion, ugly brute,
And your brothers there in thousands dead?
Dog-work, and what of it
Save somewhat you lost or covet?—
Lives a man who loves to love it?

IV

Whatever you may not love
I hold for wrong in the run of men,
'Though you capture not freedom enough,
'Though the hope you have come never again;
For what may a man do more
Than man him by mightiness of soul,
Whether his gain be a puny score
Or he crush the world and he get the whole?
One way only is to do
To get the best and most of you;
Follow love—love is kind and true.

Hell

V

Gun-tread and banner drop,
Give me your halt and hush of arms,
Let the college of kindness prop
Your purpose, lift you your palms
To brotherward, which is to skyward,
Lest you be mouth-mock and just byword
Among the nations to come
By your cutthroat-dance to pipe and drum
To settle each high dispute
By genius to throttle and loot
Like dragons, play stink-pot brute!

VI

Hark to the click of drums,
Look to your stripes on high,
Hark how the trombone hums
Fair music and men roll by
By columns of bosom-chums
For never quiver nor sigh
Where cannon on cannon comes
Nor a soul could answer you why,
Only their trumpet and drums
Marshal them forward to die
And be scattered as crumbs!

VII

Epaulets bright as a sun,
Shoulder to shoulder to flash
Like a breath of your Vulcan-gun,
Like swords in your sash—

Oriflamb flaunted in air
As an eagle flaps his wings
Before he pounces to tear
The soul out of things—
For wrong, for right, what matter which?
Strike up the drums to pitch-fork pitch
To toss your mates to an ugly ditch!

VIII

To pipes and cymbals of war,
Close man's heart for an open door!
Sweep their land by storms of fire
To gorge your hungry chop-desire
To govern men and things
By fear, by slings and stings,
Nor counts it once how conscience rings!
To pipes and the drums of war,
All hazard for an open door,
All hell to him in his track
Who lets his Heavenliness hold him back!

IX

Parade to the shoulder of arms!
A truce to your cycle of calms!
Rouse up the lungs now he comes,
Diapason of bugles and drums
To a conqueror-chief—have a care
For the true pale maiden lying there
Without a breath at your feet—
How she was fair as her soul was sweet,
Her soldier's mate, and so soulful-true
The shot that struck him struck her too—
Just so much the worse for you!

SHELDRAKE ELEGANCE

DUTIFUL

As she was beautiful
This girl was whom I knew in my time;
Such were the grace of her
And happy face of her,
Voice so like a silver chime
I could not catch a least note in rhyme,
'Though I hear it now and again,
Like the pretty bugle of a wren.

So fair she was to see,
As I saw her then,
A man would lose his whole majesty
If he could never know her again
When morning brought her no other care
Than caroling, leaping free
To perch like a blossom in the air
For perfect so he could not spare
One moment of her and she so fair.

Yet could she not see
Herself so but what
There must he ways for her to be
Yet more beautiful—there were angles
Ribbons could make, there were bangles
Ears could wear, there were bays,
Yuccas, cutish bonnet-ways,

The diamond-eye which blinks and spangles,
Feather-head displays;

Why not teach the cheek
New cunning, one daub
Of pink, one way to rob
Modesty of a chance to speak,
Or just about the throat
Put little knuckles of pearl,
As if they could strike a note
Or match the swan-white neck of a girl
For Beauty half a mote?

Is not Beauty enough,
Take it in the rough?
Spare us your hand
That would clip and doctor and countermand.
As well I take my Shiraz-grape,
Plump it in your pot of sand
For a whiter new pure kind of land,
Dock it to one size and shape,
Tie this ribbon in the nape
For witness to my master-hand!

Her Beauty would not do,
Was not enough to satisfy—
She must have sunflower, plomb-blue,
Old fustic or pot of dye
To smother herself, snuff out
The dimple-play, river pout,
Make herself over new,
All to try to persuade her
She could be handsomer than God made her.

Sheldrake Elegance

Now then came her lover,
Who for first time saw above her!
She stood not so high
As once she was in his keen eye
For Beauty—he could not see
Trace of the old supremacy
Of sweet face that used to be,
Now it was lost in feathers
Like a new moon in a mix of weathers.

So she lost her lover so
By seeming more, by being less
Than just her own true loveliness—
Gone was her charm as cheek will go
Out of a rose if I indigo
The blush just as it tries to blow—
One sure thing was this: he was gone
Like starlight out of a melted dawn,
Nor reason for it she could con.

Gold was her portion in this world,
Plenty rich yellow mighty gold;
She should be furbelowed and pearled,
Wonder would wonder to behold
One so fine so young,
Her pearls to dangle from every tongue,
She to shine alone
As shines the moon in an empty zone
All by a Beauty not her own.

Yet life proved to be not enough
That she herself just herself should love,
Now her neglected heart
Began to play a part.

Herself just and her gold
And the story is old:
Nothing was in it to satisfy
Longing which will not die—
Always came the one certain sigh,

One fine low whisper in the heart
How nothing in the world is much
If love be out of it, how your art,
Your power supreme, your gold and such
 Will dwindle to a point,
The life you go run out of joint
If you hold this soul-part back,
Never give the heart a snack,
Try to fatten on a lack.

Came, too, one old truth new again:
Each new loss makes a certain gain,
As there one day it was told
For wonder that she lost her gold—
For so it was—she was bereft
Of feathers and not a quillful left—
Just her plain look again was there;
Once more came the girlhood hair,
Free-play laugh and careless air
To put her at her best for fair.

Next now her lover came to see
The old Beauty in her—'t was an hour of May,
Close to evening, there was one way
Straight to his cinnamon-tree
Of a garden corner, the old place
Of pretty spurge, corn-bottle grace—

Sheldrake Elegance

There came just her sweet one sigh
Now the new moon began to ply
And he came straight to her lip and eye

With all of that one mortal kiss
Men die for rather than they miss—

Truth was as truth is,
The simple-skirted way of her
And natural free play of her
Made marvel of such supremacy
Of loveliness as found his heart
By her art of knowing not an art,
This one text put plain above her:
Hide your gold if you want a lover!

HIS WORST

The value of evil lies in this:
The thing was meant to be overcome
In a fight to see who the master is,
One test of strength in the total sum
Which moulds a man, builds him strong—
There is the value of wrong!

I

WHAT a bull-hided ass
Man is to think
He may let the God's truth pass,
Ignore it with a wink,
May throw him against the laws
Which govern his chops and paws,
Drive smash against what is right
To be master by might,
Nor sees Beauty around
In sky and ground,
Beauty wherever he looks
In storm-horns or brooks,
Beauty of soul and limb,
Beauty the food and flower of him,
He deep there in the swim
With no power to get out
More than the sun-beam trout
May dodge his spots or water-spout—
Beauty which, whenever struck,
Strikes back at his blunder-pluck.

His Worst

Speaking of laws, by the way,
 Effect and cause day by day,
 Laws of matter and mind
 Which I hunt and I find,
 Laws which hold each planet true
 To a track in the skies,
 Stripe a sea-bream's gullet blue,
 Plant stars in his eyes—
 Laws which also I find
 Harness wings to the mind
 Till I grow high inclined,
 Half by the truth I find,
 Half by the false I leave behind—
 Speaking of mind and matter laws,
 How they work effect and cause,
 Did you think Right and Wrong
 Piped another song,
 Ran hap-hazard wild
 As a runaway child,
 Are governed by no rules,
 Like a pair of fools?

Oh, brother, there goes one beautiful law
 Worth your hunting for,
 Power of Rightness to run
 Above any sun,
 Power of Rightness to cut through
 All the worst in view,
 Power of Rightness to survive
 All you see alive,
 Beauty to the flaming spit,
 Man to become part of it
 If he would seize upon Power,
 Ride the riding hour!

II

Take to thought this story once I heard!

True, I wager, ev'ry word,
An old-time tale which was told
By men who were growing old,
So could get one glimpse of truth
Never they got in youth!

Young my man was who grunted in wealth,
Held his two lips up to health,
Nothing he wanted which men
Try for again and again
Ere they fail, ere they drop—
Wealth and power filled his crop.

Alone he lived in his palace-home;
Full away far the gilded dome
Was seen of men as they saw
How he lived to angle for
Evil ever—never he stood
For a game which was trued.

Beautiful was as a place could be
All about him—one could see
Grape-hyacinth and monkey-flower
Lure a musk-ox to their bower,
Big battalions of pink birds
With only songs for words,

Porphyry fountains so high in air
They caught breath of fire there;
Apple saplings in short dress
Made their mark for loveliness;
Everywhere was everything
To let the senses ring.

His Worst

For understanding my young man well,
I have this of him to tell:
Wrong he loved, by way of choice
As boy among fellow boys,
Joyed in evil as a fish
Leaps to his wash and wish.

He grew his way to be man by spite,
Grew cruel and mean by might
Of power and wealth which he had,
All he thought to do was bad
As hell could think it or do it,
Nor thought he once ever he could rue it.

Alone he lived, yet kept no mind
Ever to be left behind
In what this world counts first,
To tickle each kind of thirst,
Put the senses to bubble,
Dodge every trouble.

Think ever of marriage he could not
For its forced forget-me-not;
Could not think of it for love,
That were never game enough,
Besides being twice too good
To match lips with his puma-mood.

Evil he loved, yet he could not find
Any woman of his kind
To fill his thought, take his hue,
Match him, take to evil too
For love of it, so he played
This game of craft instead:

A child he took to his home to raise,
 To mould to his thought and ways,
An orphan child which he found
 Famished in the village pound,
Took her to coddle and keep
 And one day to reap.

She should take on his color of thought,
 Be what he himself was to a dot,
Grow to his liking for slave,
 Be like him, petulant knave,
Bend to his whim like a flower
 To the lick of a shower.

She should drink luxury all her days,
 Learn of his top-model ways
How to catch sweetness which drops
 From a thistle-bird's chops,
Know of life how it is made
 Just for jackal and jade.

Nought she should know of aught good in life,
 Not know of husband and wife,
Of virtue, wisdom, or truth,
 Not know of love in her youth,
Only of evil to do
 To be great through and through.

Grew she up so to take his will,
 To step to his drum-tap drill,
Took his thought, mastered his knack
 Of loving life for its lack
Of what was noble or true—
 So she lived, so she grew.

His Worst

The animal in him took first prize,
Tiger-love to light his eyes,
Lips like two nuggets of flame
To destroy—all his great game
Was just to dodge truth and its kinks,
Play loose as a lynx.

Life they both took as the wild winds slap
At my pear or carrot-cap,
Thought not of others, but just
Of their swill-tub of lust,
Cut loose, cut wild in their day
Their gyrfalcon way.

The Beauty of things she saw about,
He would tell her with his flout,
Was meant to inflame the blood,
Body was the only good,
Hot flesh, bold bowel-desire,
Four lips and one fire.

His pink small birds in his bouquet-tree
Only sang luxuriously
To bring taste into the lips,
Tingle nerves to the finger-tips,
Join mouth and mouth y-fere,
Put a lute in the ear.

Touch just and taste were points in sight:
Take his lemon-tree and kite,
Matched were they two to mingle
Life and soul and elbow-tingle,
All for the sake of one gulp
Of treacle and pulp.

Beauty could serve no use, so he saw,
Worth her time for trying for
But to send blood to a boil,
Teach the white forearm to coil,
Lips to low-languish to die—
Every breath is a sigh!

See how he counted without his host!
Never he saw her other ghost
Which held her, kept her in keep,
Even as the wild winds sleep
Before the spurs of the sun
Put them to the run,

Her hidden self which he never saw,
Never once was looking for,
Her deep-down soul which was there,
Held her in keep and in care,
Would not let her once out of sight
The small part of a night—

Her soul! Oh, friend, take to this for true,
There's the subtle soul in you
Will not be lost sight of,
Clings to Beauty for the might of
All things which are dreamed or known,
And they are all your own!

For look, one night they swang together
In his hammock as a feather
Tosses careless in the wind;
The day was worn and thinned
To one small opening of pink,
As if night tried to wink;

Fell they asleep in each other's arms
 Among his fan-trees and balms;
Song-lips whistled in the leaves,
 Fig-birds fingered at the eaves
Of fountains of silver song
 Through the sweet night long.

Each little end of a thumb of grass
 Pointed more than this life has,
Would dangle an eye of dew,
 Throw one pure look back to you
All only that you should see
 More is to come to to be

Than jowls or your angles made of knees,
 Lip-lust and the elbow-squeeze,
Pap-life which men so boast of
 They have gained, made the most of—
Puff-balls to scatter their dust
 To the slaps of a gust!

Life was worth well doing, she dreamed—
 Summer dog-wheat how it beamed,
Branches for fingers to reach
 To drop her their fatted peach,
She in her way to grow great
 As blue plums in a date.

Dreamed she, so, she sickened at heart
 To think of what tumble-bug part
She played in life, so far for what
 Counted only diaphragm-pot,
All the best part of her gone
 Like a star after dawn.

The man at her side was monster-thought!
Think of him now she could not
But for hatred and fierce hard heart
Which throbbed to tear him apart—
To scatter him limb and limb
Now was her one thought of him!

Nor sooner thought than there as she slept,
Softly to his throat she crept,
Locked her white teeth where each small breath
Whispered to him of only death,
Tore his throat out for her feast
By the bite of a beast.

How his white nostrils pointed sharp
As the fins of a carp,
Such two straight eyes meant to die
Staring into yonder sky
As if for a chance to see
What was left him to be!

Each star looked down the same as before,
Yet he should see them no more!
Had he gone another way
To begin again—who shall say,
Save that he did his worst
And the thing is curst?

MY FRIENDS

I

HOMELESS sea-coot perches at night
In sea-rip, between its teeth,
To claw storms, swallow blight,
Knowing never how to breathe,
How the washes suck and seethe,
Marshalls his feathers in place
For oars, one foot out for rudder,
The other under for his keel
To straight him like an iron heel
And not a little ounce of pudder
As on he drives to cut and peel
The seas off so to let me feel
He is master to split them through
The spike-beak of foam-ugly blue
To ride them out to the top-end too.

II

Molly-mauw is in wing
To plow above the thundering;
I could see the sea-boil churn
Round which once he fetched one turn,
One wheeling wheel as if to split
The bull-wind, make mince of it,
Then the clean upward shoot,
All the planet under foot

As if to point one point to men
Worth their looking to again,
The point in his blue meridian.

III

Helminth furrows through his park,
Sails by no chart under ground,
Makes him master of the dark
By tough rub, downward bound
To where he neither knows nor cares
So he bore the planet through
Trusting to his power to run
Up or down, builds no stairs,
Which is more than you could do
Who cry for Heaven and help and sun.

IV

Fingerling fears not his wave,
There he lives there in his grave,
Topsy-turvy for his sport,
Endless ocean for his court,
Every unknown coast his port,
And he no end in sight
But fine fins and endless flight
To keep his poise, flash his blue,
Loophole power to button to.

V

Little lintie in his cell
In a fork of zinfandel,
Under his one leaf for shed
To duck the sun off overhead,

My Friends

Tunes his master-music true,
 One song for him, two for you
 If you put an eye to glisten,
 Let him know you love to listen,
 He of no greedy thought,
 What's to come of it, what not,
 So he unbosom to sing,
 You for listener, he for king
 Till there your heart will clap and ring.

VI

Ibex under quitasol
 Of his branch of ice,
 Mastiff mountain for his doll,
 Hungry gullet for his price
 He pays for power to climb
 Up above pastures of snow
 Into all shining rime,
 Leaves his bath of sun below,
 Snatches at the blue point there
 Of fire which has all heaven to share,
 And life is blue fire everywhere.

VII

Primula in Labrador hood
 Puts up a hand to take
 What there is of eternal good
 I call sweet, elegant make
 Of slender waist, of cotton cheek
 In scarlet, like a lip to speak;
 Thinking fingers, power to pass
 Thought up to you from the grass—

Such the wing-swing to and fro,
Such whisper, if kind winds blow,
Such tiny hand up to you so
To hold to, to not let you go!

VIII

Grass-moth like an eagle sails
In his forest of green spars,
Makes his heaven, never fails,
Yet he never sees the stars,
Plays his Maygame in the sun,
Overjoy on wing to run,
While scarcely is his dancing done
Ere he will round the sunbeam swing,
Fetch his poise for silvering
In open heaven, there to cling
To perish boldly on the wing.

IX

Ounce in his cape of fur
Forgets winter, forgets to stir;
The sky empties its dippers,
For here is snow in the wind
—Only the wind in silver slippers—
While my monarch has it pinned,
His jaws in the snarling wind,
His claws in the mountain roots,
While I hear him beat and gnash,
Take the tough wind's ugly gash,
So who is there now disputes
His monarchy, his royal routes
To lordship beyond storm or brutes?

My Friends

X

Sword-bee plunges his sword
—Wise of you you take my word—
Strikes because he follows sweet
And you there bent on his defeat;
He files in blossom, drinks the dew
Of moly, while just as you
Come to put your bill there too
He lets you have it, through and through!
So he monarchs in lilac limb,
Not the panther troubles him;
Sucks the honeysuckle's teat,
His life just his trick to tickle
Gullet and he drowns in treacle—
So he souls and bowls for sweet,
Only sweetness his defeat.

XI

Chelonian lives in his casket,
Ducks his head in, too, to mask it;
Unbeautiful, yet is he wise
To pass the sun off and the flies
To capture peace before he dies;
Never lip of him to speak,
Never blush in the iron cheek,
So safe in his pelt of brass
High hyena lets him pass,
Just his safety all he has.

XII

Chum-dog—he such my friend
As makes no mention of himself

More than mute aerial elf,
Follows me to the ripe dead end
Of any worst way I go,
Takes disaster with me so
Like a spark of what is divine
I know his fine heart ties to mine
By love which is frightless and true
And mightier than many of you—
Lion-bold to take his stand
And we take life and death in hand
The way we love and understand,
While what is there more of limb
In you, of handsome spirit-whim
In you than what I find in him?

XIII

These are my friends—I know them so
All by their one way they go
To ripen, to take their seat
Higher than your game—Defeat!
Look how they fetch all they are!
Look how they come near and far
As any spirit, any star!
Look them, will you, through and through
To see in them the power in you
To ripen, gripen, strike to do,
And not the gold-coin-sky in view!

XIV

These are my friends to the last ditch!
They take just my itch and pitch,
My love of crumpet, my finger-twitch,
And, mark, they never drop a stitch!

My Friends

Under the sun they stripe and broaden,
Whether kinging or down-trodden,
Open eyes to greaten, Godden;
So I get my truth from them
As it arrows from my gem;
So they show what soul may be,
So they bring their soul to me.

xv

My friends and always my friends!
Life to them for little ends
Did you think? Which were greater,
Surmullet in emerald water
Prancing in his palace-quarter,
Or you, twibil up for slaughter,
You the boasted Beauty-hater,
Nature's mighty underrater?
I and they seek the same ends
So as soul on soul depends,
So I tell you we are friends!

MAN OR BOOK?

ONCE I had a friend was writing a book—

Now look

To see what a world of pains he took

In his optative, in his preterit,

His purpose to wrestle with an "if"

To argue an absolute relative,

As if spirit depended on it—

Now see,

There he would pick at Divinity

To make it less than Infinity

So he could come to understand

God too has a lip and hand,

Finds a thing to do or say

Man-mannered, the Kickapoo-way,

Takes time,

Takes means to accomplish things,

So he argued: My sparrows chime,

By which I know God whistles and sings.

First this:

What use in my heart or land

Of a God no man may understand,

A God I am meant to miss?

My word, one page of his reason

Had a kick in it of treason

Like this:

Man or Book ?

Man makes his clock by his thinking-plan,
Then is his clock like the Maker, Man!

So too

God must have a shin or two,
Likewise must have love and hate,
Have what you have to make Him great!

Like him

His Maker must have his trick and whim
To think, to reason each purpose out,
So He must have the trick to doubt,
For here is one certainest thing:

No doubt, no need of reasoning.

So too

This much truth he could not see:

Aught other is Divinity

Than what I touch or think or see,

Neither false in it nor true,

Neither good in it nor bad,

Nor sorrow nor being glad,

But other something—who knows what

To compass endlessness by thought?

Give I an attribute to God,

Any part of man or pod,

I make Him human, Him I prefine,

Nor make me, one whit more, divine.

So on he pried for what is true:

The sun might be a breath of cold

If its lungs were only gold,

Or under lip a little blue!

Petrarch sounded for what was true

In himself, not in worlds or you,

So only doubled on the clue.

So aimed my friend, writing his book,
Always the empty-bottle-look

Of one eye sighted on one star
To take light in, hedge it about,
Never to wink an atom out,
Most as most mortals are!

One sun-born morning it was,
Under his cherry-ball haws,
A song came down from his poon-tree top,
A thrasher's voice, such chant in his crop
I only knew
He roused and raptured me too and through.

There there was now at his hand
One true-souled laughingest girl,
Such a bright heart as could understand,
Such an eye as the soul of a pearl
To rapture him too,
Gifted to read a man through and through.

"Show me your book," she said,
"Your book for the man instead,
I 'll drink it from cover to cover,
I love a book like a lover—
Let me look to see
If the book or the man count most with me.

"Ah, so, God is that or this,
Something to gain or to miss!
You play your game for an end in view,
Nor count the end or the gain in you—
The most you would do
Is make life yield its most to you.

"And what you would give, you say,
Is what you must for a way

To square accounts, so you pay your pay
To purchase God's Kingdom one fine day,
While you never knew
The Kingdom of God is the God in you.

"You glorify God, you think,
By candle or prayer-book wink,
As if it were not nobler you star
Yourself for the best of you you are
To be large and true,
God, in the end, to glorify you;

"You to be man nor snivel,
Never fear of God or Devil,
Love only, high love of truth and man
For mastership by the spirit-plan
To be highest true—
There's the whole noblest great God in you!

"You in your book take your pinch
Of what you may never know,
You try to platoon soul by the inch,
March it one way as the senses go,
So you never see
Soul is one deep divinity.

"What would you say were better,
Man to go free as a bird
To leap and sing as winds are stirred,
Or tuck his neck in a fetter
To coddle his fear,
Nor go to be greater ever or freer?

"Such is your book—as I say,
Never the throb of a lay

Of the heart; yet nought flies above
 This deep everlasting human love
 To model a soul
 Shall compass the keenest supremest whole.

"Greater the man than the book,
 Now that I 've taken my look!
 Such were the ring of my maiden voice
 Had I my way, could I take my choice,
 Nor another look
 For Truth in your one-eyed bottle-book.

"Up and away with me now
 To tune two hearts to one song
 Of the thrasher that pipes in his bough!
 Since life is so short, let love be long
 As all hope may see,
 While I sing of only my love of thee!"

WILY SMILEY

I

HE was one trick-smiler, this Smiley,
 Our Wily;
Had his way with women well in hand;
No new trick was contraband
 Which could capture—
 His task was easy:
Only to be light and breezy
 To peddle rapture
To women—he knew their kink:
Much to say, little to think.

II

By sun-up I saw him pass
 To and fro
Like a shuttle before a looking-glass
 For fashion so
To try and capture his own smile,
 Yet all the while
He knew she waited, sun-up too,
To be captured—what else lay in view,
What else, 'faith, should any girl do
 In such a smile?

III

Once I saw him take an air
 Of consequence
 Of a suffragan,
 Till I began to ask the where
 And the whence
 Of such a man—
 Buttons mainly, shrimp tie
 To lasso women, to draw their sigh,
 Yet for power, king above style,
 Was his smile, his master-magic smile

IV

To win—there 's my man—
 Win out, give little as you can,
 Was his law—
 The thing 's worth smirking or whining for
 So you win—
 Better play your smile
 Of trick and guile
 Than lose a point or a girl—
 What more 's in Rajahship or Earl?
 Smile is the soul of a pearl—

V

But not of the man—
 There 's the deep other under-smith than what
 Tickles ribs, prompts thought
 Of any bubble-belly plan,
 Which he comprehended not.
 Into a cheek of dimples
 Breaks my lake, snickers, ripples

Wily Smiley

At a breeze,
Yet is breathlessness more than these,
Lake finest, deepest, when most at ease.

VI

The one sweet maid
He aimed to take,
Now his plan was laid,
Put her heart at stake
Between him and another,
One true outfashioned nature-brother
Of soul, man-side straight
As star-beams, heart as great
As hope, nor shift nor guile,
And, save he felt it, never a smile.

VII

Yet Smiley took the lead;
A light wind struts before a gale;
Of nothing much was there need
For Smiley, save to smile
Fulsomy to never fail,
A trick as much his habit
As the tail-bob of a rabbit—
Small trouble, you would suppose,
As flowers come and this world goes,
For him to pluck his rose.

VIII

The other one there,
Man-fashion fair,
Grew shy now he saw circumstance
Was come to overtop his chance
Of winning the girl—

Had yet to learn how power which is love
Wins ever over and above
Pistareen grin, button-jacket,
 Red feather racket—
They learn the power of love, too, who lack it.

IX

One jaspered afternoon
Of a week of June
Was a junket of flowers,
 Belle-girls in tall grass,
Clove and trillium in bamboo-bowers,
Flood of joy such an afternoon has
With—well, there now came Smiley,
Smile on, unhinging to bow
To bend himself his style wily,
His lasso-curve as he knew how!

X

There Wily was in the midst of them,
The polish of him of a gem
Clean to the last elbow-hem—
 Now he was here, now not,
Thrashed about among them just
As a bee thumps in a honey-pot,
 As needs he must
To show power, show what he could do
 To turn the heads of a few
Who look a man not once through and through,

XI

But mark his shin-style,
The wag of him, clam-shell smile

Wily Smiley

Of mouth open wide
 So they see only pearl inside,
 Mark his tri-button vest,
 Spit curls for his level best
 High-handed work of art
 To trap fancy, hook the heart—
 There was his way
 He took to juggling that day

XII

To fast-fasten them, play lielord
 By talking love—
 The lie was enough,
 Much as his bankrupt heart could afford—
 Yet such men, oft in a while,
 Get touched deeper than the smile,
 As now did Smiley,
 Sly dog, yet not so slyly
 But here for once he saw
 More in one girl than he bargained for.

XIII

She too, in a way, was caught
 By his feather-grace,
 Globird glitter, chicken face,
 As which of them was not?—
 While he, the other one there,
 Star-beam straight, lustrous fair,
 Kept to himself, could not go
 Chance-picking among them all
 At beck and call,
 So much he honored and loved her so.

XIV

His day was past and gone,
 So he said,
 This world not worth looking on,
 Life good as dead
 And she lost to him—now he saw
 No world was worth the angling for
 And she out of it—yet he could
 Not sniggle to get her, if he would—
 “Love,” said he, “must win,
 Or I lose, I ’ll not play quip and grin,”

XV

When, just by chance
 Of cunning circumstance
 She caught his eye,
 The large clean eye full of good
 As there he stood,
 Arm ’round her pet carob-tree
 Much as to say:
 “Here, at least, I may have my way,
 Since, next to you, your tree
 Has its roots in the heart of me”—

XVI

Which was more than she could brook,
 His love-lighted eye and sorrow look,
 And so
 Right as he was up to go
 To leave her there to yield
 To Smiley, to leave the field

Wily Smiley

To Smiley who seemed to know
A girl's heart best,
As was manifest
The way he had them bedevilled so—

XVII

Right as he was up to go
By the stone-wall gate
Now the hour was late,
Nor looked back to see if she cared or no,
Sudden as one wild surprise
Two small hands from just behind
Came folded over his eyes
With—"Do you so love to be blind?
Would you go and not one look to me?
Who so blind as they that will not see?"

AMONG RUINS

I

EVERYTHING ends in Beauty,
So Beauty alone survives;
So many hard hits at duty,
So many cycles of lives
All gone out, yet there in you
They stand for Beauty—so, too,
The farther they stretch away
Into some past lost day,
By that much more they hold to you
Their lost fine features, silky thought
Out of which this soul is wrought,
For which you love them—so there
Is what Beauty they wrought in you,
Like nothing other for wondrous fair,
You that so love what is fine and true.

II

I see the moon as before,
A wheel of pinnacles like a chain of eyes
Looking forevermore
Where time multiplies and man dies—
I see the clear cold sands
No time commands,
See Almamon first, then Abulfeda,
Head put straight as an ostrich feather

Through the white-eyed velvet shine
 For me, the wonder of it mine,
 Mandarin, orange-columbine
 Till I go to think how they,
 My other brothers, went their way
 World-watching, followed the same moon
 Where it played in their lap of June,
 Warmed their cheek by it, dried their tears
 By the light of it a thousand years
 Before me—then the pale yellow
 Touches and makes a new fellow,
 New Beauty down in the soul of me—
 Each grain of sand is a dancing gem
 Now I go to think of them
 Who were the happy whole of me,
 So as I watch their same moon burn
 And chill, I give them back, in turn,
 My heart—There 's how I see
 Other Beauty yet to be,
 Vaster soul in the soul of me!

III

Athens had once her playground noise
 Of school-out, bright Ionian boys
 To the last shout of free glee,
 Such as breaks no more for you or me!
 Now comes my parrot-guide,
 Breaks reverie, snatches me aside
 With: "These pillars once were joined,
 Tuscan-work, Gothic-groined
 Before Christ—have a whiff
 At the dripstone and ditriglyph—
 This end of a pylon will show
 How poorly men do now or know

As against those Doric ones—they knew
 Trick-art, a what to do,
 As watch this truncated stair,
 How yet it polishes the air
 Into open heaven, yet none to climb,
 As if left for souls who are gone
 To take their last certain step upon
 Of a march sublime—
 Yon broken columns next by
 For fingers to point a way
 Through ruin up to permanent day
 In a constant sky.”—
 What counts all of it for me,
 Tholus or squinch-arch,
 Save that I may see
 Through the whole of it my thousand boys
 A thousand years before me,
 Now at their laurel-march,
 Now at their school-out noise,
 Hap-happy the way a boy shall be
 To be whole boy whole boy-fully?—
 Then through cornice and column
 Comes the one thought, sweet-solemn,
 How somehow they are one with me
 In spite of such eternity
 Of years as cut us apart,
 One thought, purpose, hope, heart,
 I bound to them by more
 Than broken post or corridor,
 To wit, the common human tie
 Which lingers, never to die,
 And quick each gutter-sill, each mold
 Takes new form, Beauty is there,
 The silent kind, not to be told,

Among Ruins

Soul-secret love, keenest care,
 Each small pulse of it so much
 Above pencilling or touch
As soul is super-breathful fair.

IV

Old Miletus under lake,
Not a column to be seen—
Have a sail on it, take
Thought of the Nyanza green
And wave-wash, face of silver lips
Where the same sun dodges and dips
Till evening—then the clear glass
Which will not let a star-speck pass,
But holds it that you shall see
Sky taken down to spread
Above the long-gone dead
For Beauty so eternally,
As if to say: Look not for them 'round
This dull underground,
The what they thought or built
In crowstone or terrace-tilt
Where they were once, to see how
Life grew from dug-out to dumping-scow,
But over and above all to see
How they kept growing endlessly,
Then think of it what they must be now!
Over each forgotten grave
Tumbles the silver wave
And no heed of them nor thought,
How they popinjayed or wrought,
Thales and Cadmus and the rest
Who went their way, did their best—

Thus saith the star-lighted wave:
Hang not about a little grave
Of Beginners—they saw how
A grave climbs up into tree and bough,
Yet they must climb to mightiness,
The kind which counts for less and less—
Wonder is if they ever knew
'T is mighty only to be true—
So went their way, I wonder where,
Or what direction—the sky is fair
Of promise for grave and bough,
While I wonder what they must be now!

v

My Rosalie—alas,
Came now her turn to turn and pass
Beyond me—I looked, yet none could see
Her plain way—She said it should be
Likewise plain one day to me—
This was her garden-plot
Of pretty bergamot—
There through the open field was her path
Up to the rose-ousel rath
And her look-out bower
Till she took the new wide way
Beyond me—there now I look
To find in her salmon-flower,
In her meadow-brook,
A trace of her, if I may—
Neither here is she nor there
In leaf or citronella-snare,
And the Beauty of her is everywhere—
Not what I may take or touch,

That 's not the best of it, my friend,
That red lip which has an end,
Apricot-cheek which I may clutch
To see it one day pale
Like Spring does at a flock of hail,
Seeing how I see otherwise
Than blue just or dancing dew
For Beauty in those eyes—
Somewhat is there which is true,
Marvellous truth to be trusted to,
Which is not moulded of dust and dew;
Love is there—all worlds above
And about me make not enough
To count one atomful of love;
Hope is there—will I find hope
Bounded by the Scorpio-scope,
Lodged in a pot of heliotrope?
Yesterday she stood clear and fair
As the sun-ended air—
And now no more!
I peek in at her open door:
Her reed-throated chaffinch tunes
Pæans of a thousand Junes;
There her goldfish, her little table
And room put happy-comfortable
As if to say: "Don't go—
You see her cage-bird is in tune,
Her ceiling keeps its zenith-glow,
And she 'll be back again surely soon!"
Once more now think of those eyes—
Is there light enough or blue
In the vast eternal blue skies
To print such another eye for you,
Such bobolink eye of hers,

Heart in it, Godful-true,
Where light sleeps while spirit stirs?
So I know Beauty survives
Above planetary lives
To come again and again
Where all else may be vain
Or poor picking.—Summer is on!
Small summer and my Rosalie gone,
Save this: Here fast in the soul of me
I have her to stay the dole of me—
There is the heart and whole of me!

FOR EXAMPLE:

RIGHT doing is the thing,
 Right doing stands for king!
There 's a thing for you to believe,
 A game for you to play,
A king-card up your sleeve
 For a mastodon-way
To power. Take a look
 In the symposium-book
Of stars, watch how they play
 At neither night nor day;
How they plunge and sputter for
 Power to keep the supreme law
Of Beauty, which is power
 To the eternal hour!
God-like is every sky
 In its reaching high
To blossom into might
 By majesty of Right,
Round on round of worthiness
 Loftier than heart may guess—
Nothing comes to less and less!
 Right is wealth of soul,
Wrong is the zero-goal,
 Poverty-stretch of killing care .
For each nothing which is there.
 Evil has a claw

Wholly hidden in the paw—
 Here is how the cunning law
 Worked out in a case I knew
 Of men once who sought to do
 Their evil-best, thought to win
 By biting like a moccasin,
 By serpentining tried to trick
 Right out of his bailiwick,
 Beauty out of her throne
 In yonder crown-jewel zone.

Once were two men of an ugly look:
 Thought had a task to cipher them out;
 One wore a lip of an ugly pout,
 The other an eye like a pruning-hook
 To make his way by hook or crook—
 Robbers from youth—I show you the law
 My Gospel drums and trumpets for!

In a cave these two men hovelled,
 There like rats they gnawed and grovelled
 In a hole gouged out of a rock
 In such way cunningly so
 None ever saw them come or go—
 There they conjured to pick the lock
 Of the world below.

Much was the gold they brought
 To hide in their den;
 Their way through the world like wolves they fought,
 While the best of men
 Fell prey, dropped into their clutch
 For little or much—
 Thieves and thugs were there never such.

For Example

Long as their treasure was small
 They lived in peace
To plunder—such was all
 They looked to, their way to increase
Their spoil, as other men lost
 By each trick-witted cabal—
What could it matter, the end or cost?

One hundred years are gone,
People with them—not a thought
 Of those days but is clean forgot—
Time tumbles on and on,
 Others come and go,
Till wonder is men feel and know
 Just as they did in the long ago.

A shepherd boy is caught
One early morning in a storm,
 Makes the cave where these robbers wrought
To house him and keep him warm,
 When—to show how nothing dies,
See what marvel woke his eyes
 To wonderment and shock-surprise!

Here in this darkest quoin
 Glistens their heap of coin;
Next by in the after-hold
 Lies their mound of gold,
Yellow-bright as sun and moon,
 Lasting as each granite dune,
Thousands of ducats multifold.

Two skeletons, each fast to the other
 By jaw-bite, not as brother to brother,

Fingers clinched in each other's eyes
 To tear the brain out once was there,
 Each at the other's mercy lies
 In clutches of death, brother to brother,
 Right where each one killed the other!

How they fought you could see,
 Like wild beasts, each his mastiff-hold
 On his brother's throat, never plea
 For life—they fought for their heap of gold
 Tooth and nail unto death,
 Each one to stop his brother's breath
 For loot-heap, nor loose his hold.

There they lie to grin at each other,
 Skull and bones of each blasted brother,
 While next beside them each heap of gold
 Knew cunning enough to slip their hold!
 Let him be mighty to overbold
 For conquest to gripple what he can,
 What is there of wrong shall profit a man?

DEAD

Not what he gained, but what he gave was his,
His best he had;
What may a man give the world more than this,
Or what is there else he shall keep
When he drops off to sleep?

You saw him drop, you and you,
Here to these flags where your world went by
And would not look—they knew and still they knew
How he must wilt by the way to die,
While over the lips of him silence would reign
For your world that went sneaking by.

You saw his left cheek flush and pale
Like a day does just as it feels the dark,
Fingers unloose, eye-light fail;
You saw how death had made him a mark—
What hand was put out to pillow his head
Where stones snap back with a bark?

What did he when he was a child
But pull at tulips, like any of you,
His eye-laugh when some garden smiled,
Leaping to make the most of it too?
How your world is locked out if soul be free
To be new like tulips are new!

Did you think him different from you,
Or otherwise so he could not feel?
Fine sense, do you hold, was made for few,
The rest must thrive under a heel?
How comes it then, now as you see, he could die
Like a man, such lips under seal?

Does he lack soul who could stand
Like a God in his place, face up to die,
None about him to take his hand,
No look save one from a growling sky,
The whole pride of him brooched like a jewel there
As your world went snivelling by?

Look to the face, the fine mild face,
Lip lowered, a smile left to play at each cheek,
As if the spirit, on leaving its place,
Saw some new world and wanted to speak!
Any small meanness there as he lies
Eyes up, any look of him weak?

Look to the hand, too, open wide
Put out to you as if to say:
"No malice I bear to the other side;
We shall get together again one day,
For the thing must come 'round which heart points out
To be best in the hard long way.

"We had our task, both you and I:
I took to right by my mighty will;
What matters what way I take to die,
A wife's green satin lap at her windowsill,
Blood-orange opals to finger my brow,
Or this curb for pillow of chill?

"Do ribbon-strings tie by a knot
Fine inside soul to an outside worth
Now I go, by way of our common lot,
To the green satin lap of the earth?
Did you think the soul of me, put to the test,
Gathers death and not a new birth?

"My whole first worth from start to last,
The best there was of me, that I gave;
My fastened grip on one manful past
Was all I could look to to hope to save;
What more may they think of to have and to hold
Who stoop to look into a grave?"

That would he say if he could speak;
Take the hand held out to you, wish him luck,
His boy-smile there still stuck to his cheek,
The thin chin turned up into pluck!
Make the most of him, just as he is—I know
His way if your hour had been struck.

As youth came on, one breast of strength,
The open warm hand—I knew that too—
Never a day too wide for its length,
Nothing too much for the will to do,
I have seen him stand by to fight like a lynx
For the thing that was kind and true.

One night—how well I remember
How the wind, like a leopard's claw, struck through
While trying to run away from December—
One lay, like he lies now, part blue,
Part white—frost and death were out with their colors—
One storm-waif, a white grave in view;

Snow was wrapping him 'round at last—
Night was deep like the drifts—an end was near—
His sleep was calm, each fist was fast,
One little low breath, the wax-white ear,
As he, whom you stand there to doubt and shun,
Drew to the boy, did his best to hear

If any breath of a soul was there,
Put half his cloak to him, caught his wrists,
Took him close in arms—there 's life to share
With a brother-world when love insists—
There he held fast to him into his night
Of battles with biting mists

Till he too, now beckoned by sleep,
Dropped his whole thought before he knew,
As quick the storm had him hard in keep,
Pinned him down where the death-breath flew,
Where they were found next day, breast to breast,
With life enough left for the two.

Now came his love-days, all at once,
But shy, like arbutus creeps through green
Low mushroom country, life for the nonce,
Half a low blush partly seen—
Hark how the best of him only dealt
Death to such days as might have been!

He loved the girl, she loved him too;
They were as what would be called one hope
Which nought could come between, put in two,
Like sweet and its breath of heliotrope;
One place they found in the world at last,
But all outside of his horoscope.

One day, now Fall was come again
To put new snow-caps where bells had been,
Came one brother-friend to look in vain
For some right way he could come between
To claim the girl, since he loved her too, worse luck,
With love which was young and keen,

So pined most like an aspen leaf
Quivers to shrivel 'twixt wind and sun;
He was not strong to butt against a grief
Like him who lies here, his heart-work done,
Who knew a deep difference between the two,
What one would seek, the other shun.

He knew all men measured not the same;
Half weakness were some, others all strong;
Your fern will go down in a little flame,
Great hazel hang on to fight it long;
How the boy-heart would break if he lost the girl!
How the way of this world was wrong!

So, too, he could not look to see
His fine young friend with a rough old care
To hawk-moth the cheek where the rose should be,
Put the cross-wrinkles everywhere;
What counted it, too, what he gained, what he lost,
So the best of all love was there,

Love which has nought to gain,
But the whole best side of life to lose,
Would not turn back to your world again
For all it has to give, refuse,
Since the way is straight out beyond, nor back,
And loss has an infinite use.

So spake he to his friend like this:
"Take the girl, tell her your full young heart;
She shall learn love may not go amiss;
Trust all to me to perform my part;
She shall learn to forget me, to put me by
For you in her change of heart."

As so she did, for he made it so
She lost her love of him day and day,
While the friend stepped in, took never "No"
For answer, as over the way
At yon gable stoop there they live to love
As he lies here, clay unto clay.

I know what your world will say,
How he played the fool and he lost the game
Which they play for what it is worth to-day,
Since the winding up is all the same
If a man shall lose or win a hand,
So there 's only the fool to blame.

Ah, so your world may know a fool
By the game he plays to a forfeiture,
Just as wisdom—here 's your golden rule—
Is a trick to make the profit sure;
Who loses is lost, your way you think,
Even in a game of coverture.

Yet think again—let us suppose
He kept the girl to himself—he knew
One heart would snap like a wrinkled rose,
His own pop out as hawk-eyes do;
How white he is, his face to Heaven
In the melt of a pitiless dew!

Suppose him to live to-day,
There with his love at her window-sill,
His boy-face friend to put lips to clay
As he does now—what a tongue is still!—
He would get what your world has to give for love
Which blossoms to pink and fulfil.

The boy will have dropped by the way,
But what of that, there are friends to spare;
The weak must go so the strong may stay,
Nature's flat old tune is everywhere;
Just a trick to survive, with a creed or two,
And the soul of all souls is there!

Is to succeed, to gain an end,
To force such advantage where I can,
To play my game, neither fool nor friend,
Life's best soul-portion of its plan?
Then were the chipmunk mightier than its God,
This world were greater than the man!

Is the world so much, in any sense
So fair or great that spirit is filled
By a purpose planned in the present tense
And all is well when the lip is stilled?
Yet here is a soul—how he stares at the stars—
Which your world could never have filled.

He took his place where cross-roads crook
Like an elbow which runs to hand and spall;
Either way is right, nor he stopped to look,
Both lead where power in the man is all,
And your profit only a spit of wind—
How the ways of the world are small!

Ah, I see, he is poor to-day,
The shank there is lean, the boot boiled out;
You 'll have to bury him, he cannot pay;
Somewhat was wrong in his make, no doubt;
Thumb-eyed, may be, or stunt, or mickle worse,
One go-lucky unlucky lout

Who put his price on life too low,
Undervalued things which make for power,
Cast his lot by chance, let chances go,
Played fast and loose with the chain-shot hour,
So nought is left by him men may take
For gold, which is your kind of power.

You wrong him deep as hell!
He starved his throat that the rest might stay,
Could not hold to one silver shell,
The whole price of his troublesome day,
If a brother once stepped to the curb to drop
To the street-pit over the way.

So he ended as he began,
Himself left out when profit came,
Which may not be Genius, yet is it Man,
While right there is your coin in a game
Which is played for an empty soul, pretty much,
Or a life-size hole in a frame—

As here he is—not once he spoke,
He could not have gone another pace
For love of God or to dodge the stroke,
Not for love of his climbing race,
As witness the heart of him still hanging back
Like stars in his evening face.

Peace, then, and good will to the boy!
He built in the soul with world left out,
And what has been built which Gods destroy?
This day one sure way has come about
For one who not once tried to escape,
One way straight up and out

And above and beyond it here,
This earth for one stepping-off place at best,
And we will look back to him, year on year,
The love he gave with his wide eyes west,
To wonder and wish him well where he goes
To new power and peace with the rest.

KNOW THY PHYLLIS

TAKE it for fact and I tell you this
 Of this one girl,
One pretty plucky-minded miss
 Of lock and curl
And lip and eye and cheek and chatter
Which spared a man any thought to flatter.

Often a quiet evening and he,
 Her bullfinch man,
Looking his mortal best he could be,
 Would fetch his plan
For a drive to take her by moon
The Jew-jog road for a taste of June.

So truly she put her trust in him,
 Her featherly man,
Never she thought, 'though day grew dim,
 Of his subtle plan
To get her to going his way
Of the wild jump and tigerish play.

More was to think of than she could know
 In her short life,
How not all men, as men come and go,
 Will take to wife,
But rather, just for dash and fling,
Would snatch at the kiss, yet keep the ring

Know Thy Phyllis

Such a night it was as I know how
The moon was out
Like a sickle to hook and reap, when now
Came scowl and pout
To change his face to animal-play
Once he saw he was not to have his way.

Fifteen miles from home for fair!
The fields stood thick
In meadow-rue among moonbeams there
To help him trick
To try to snare, by his spiderly art,
The heavenliness of her clean young heart.

"Life is a kiss, and then we are gone,"
He said to her,
Right where the dew-shine was being born
In crowfoot and fir;
"Let us take to the woods lest we miss
Of making the most of life and its kiss!"

"I shall not stir," came the sharp quick word
For sudden shock,
As if a soul's very voice were heard
In some solid rock!
"Make you the most of it, my friend,
But I do not stir from this carriage-end!"

"Ah so!" said he. "Then take you my word
For lordly true:
If you will not stir, then you shall be stirred,
Shall be forced to do
My will, for I am master by right
Of my ripe red heart and your lips in sight;

"For look—refuse to go with me now
 To yonder wood
 Where the owl keeps watch through his cedar bough
 While the quail is wooed,
 And by my stars in yonder dome
 I leave you here and you foot it home!"

"Oh, well, if you put it so, why so,"
 She replied,
 "There 's only for me to yield and go,
 Power 's on your side!
 Foolish it were that I try to do
 Other than follow and fellow you!"

So said, my gentleman now leaps out,
 Will hitch his horse,
 Never the trifle end of a doubt
 She means, of course,
 To follow close to his beck and hail
 As now he climbs for the martingale,

When—sudden-sharp as a flash,
 Whip once in hand,
 Both reins she plucks and is off at a dash
 He could understand,
 While by the stars in yonder dome
 There my rare gentleman footed it home!

ESTO PERPETUA

THE blind can feel their way,
And 'though I could not see,
Somehow I felt she cared for me
That long autumn-field day
I waited to know what she would say
Of my heatherbell,
Of my bosom-spell
Of thought for her—well,

I waited so long—she said she would come—
Quail and cricket put pipe and drum
To the wind to get their bubble-hum
Quite as if they knew she would come
And I could wonder and keep dumb—
There I waited now
By her olive-bough,
Wondered when and how

She would come. I know how you think,
How only what I may see or touch
Makes this life I have worth a wink,
And so you value it for much
Just by your swallow of sight and touch,
For the tripe you bite,
For your drink of light,
For the sign in sight!

But why not this other thinking too:
 Flesh and blood make the least of you,
 Puff and smut and beast of you,
 While what is of you for best,
 Great heart, deep spirit, and the rest,
 Keep dodging your clutch
 And sight and touch
 And prison-hutch.

Soul is not tied to a tree,
 Nor more is it tied to you, my friend,
 Looks to more to breathe and be,
 Is not concerned about any end,
 Only this wisdom to comprehend:
 To be what is great,
 And at any rate
 To dare any fate!

Somewhat such way I was thinking then,
 Was catching at flower-spikes where they grew
 Lilliputian patch-wings in blue,
 Quite that way I was thinking, when
 Far beyond me my chorus-wren
 Seemed to make his bed
 In the overhead
 Where the sun was red.

In such a deep cloud where he flew,
 Gold and emerald 'round him grew
 Till he grew gold and emerald too,
 Took what was fine of the sky,
 Saffron to azalia dye,
 Coiled his lofty scroll
 'Round the purple pole
 Like a flight of soul!

Esto Perpetua

Came he so sailing along,
Wing put out like a timid hand
As if to feel of such new cloud-land
If he might light on the silver prong,
Drop me his world of perfect song
As I looked his way,
Watched him rise and play
In his pompous day,

Saw he was aiming to come to me,
For sooner than I could think
There he hung in my olive-tree,
All the while like a tiny link
Between his sky overhead and me,
And as if to say
I should have my play
At his sky one day.

There now there lay at my feet
One small garden-bed which grew
Clethra in meadowsweet
Where she lay whom I once knew
To be so sweet and perfect too!—
There my wren had dropped
Where her flowers were propped
And his song was stopped;

Kept his hold, and he would not stir
From his flower he held to above her head,
While I thought, could it be the soul of her
Come again to be with the dead,
To show to me there
How her soul was fair
As my bird in air?

Then off again to his sky
 To prove to me soul is high,
 Two souls in one, just she and I,
 To point me the way she went,
 Bright Heaven above it bent
 For my endless Flight
 Where the way is Height,
 Where the gain is Might.

Could I be waiting for her?—my wren
 Sang never and never again!
 Emerald and gold in apogee
 Pointed where she waited for me!
 All power is to reach to to be
 Was the thing I said
 As the dawn grew red
 Just above her bed.

A ROBBER

I

GIVE us a breeze, you pulpitarian,
Of your second century thought!
Tell us how you laid your plan
So you whistled and God wrought!
Tell us what you gain by bringing
Man to his knees, to qualm-singing,
To bondage of thought, your under-study
To swallow your clap-trap of luddy-fuddy!
Will you, by squatting at an altar,
By poking your head in a halter,
Think to please any God?
Will you look up to whine
From a lap you call divine?
Will you look up to wheedle,
Will you look down to tweedle
With the God's mightiness in you,
Try to doubt of your power to grow
The way the universes go,
Build you your kind of God for master
That shall put you fast in plaster,
To not be what you nature to be,
Part of that same divinity
To not whimper, to not be cowed,
But high God-like, soul-endowed
To put force against force to do
What is noblemost of you

By free play and a free hand,
 All your power at your command,
No underdom, nor any knuckling
 To Power, nor any truckling
To any God for favor,
 For fear, no hand to quaver,
But force-foremost to make of you
 Match-work to yonder gold and blue?
To please a God you shall be a God
 Out to the rounded period!
But Gods ne'er worship, they only love,
 Which is God-fashioned great enough
For man, his love to be great
 As love is, he to mould his fate
To overpower and dominate
 What Powers are lined against him;
Man to be—see my truth is this—
 Great as all greatness in him is
To climb to his best and most
 For not a thought of God or Ghost,
But only for love of what
 Makes for power in the soul of him
To capture the highest whole of him,
 He to be ever mastered not,
He his own God and soul and thought!

Wherefore do men love to be unsouled,
 To be God-governed and so controlled
They shall bend double to break in two
 As wind-swept grasses do?
Shall man ne'er play the man,
 Shall man ne'er play the God
To all utmost in him he can,
 Nor humble him a grunt or a nod?

A Robber

God rules your world, you say,
 So you noodle and pray,
 Nor see all iron Law there to rule it—
 Snub you the Law once, try to fool it
 And you trap one fact, my king-word true:
 Wrong 's to righten, there 's a thing to do
 Will let you think a thing or two!

Not down to your knees
 Any God to please,
 But high as your meridian,
 You for masterpiece, God and man
 To grow to more soul to see
 Life 's beyond life eternally.

II

In Lombardy this tale is told,
 And the tale is old,
 Yet everywhere to me and you
 Truth is both old and new,
 So right it is I give it you
 For the way it is told
 For solemn true.

Once in one swamp-side hut
 Lived a robber, and but
 For what cute cunning he took
 To dodge your dog and my hook,
 The jail-bells had been ringing,
 The hangman had had him swinging;

A robber rough uncouth,
 Bold-eyed from youth,

The claw-foot of a cat,
Born to bite his way like a rat,
Nor good he meant to any,
But meant he wrong to many.

In among his mountains—
They send their trees like fountains
Of flowers to a yellow blow
Of dew-drop in aloe glow—
He is driven to the valley-flap-end
For refuge, and never a friend

Nor rest—each way he is hurled
As dust is blown about the world,
Yet drops back again to earth
To prove you the dust has worth—
Slinking to wince like a mariput
For fear in his mud-heap hut.

People came and went
Ever the world over so,
Nor thought to meet his grapplement
And club, to take his blow,
To feel his fingers at their throat
To pinch their breath out and last groat.

Now is a morning of spring;
The wheatear, just for love of the thing,
Sends his song to a pinnacle-ring,
The place is wild in wild-flower braid
As any Heaven could be made,
The year is in dress-parade.

“Now I have you in my hold”
Shouts robber to Jew, “hands up,

A Robber

Unshovel your pockets of gold,
Or dig your ditch to die like a pup
And no quarter, this very spot,"
As he covers his man by threat and shot!

Small parleying of any sort!
Diplomatism is cut short
For once for my roadside chap
Stock still, his life in a trap,
Nor more for him to do or know
Than hand his gold out, whether or no.

On goes the robber on his way,
Thinks him rich and nought to pay,
When, of a sudden, ahead
Stalks a man, half alive, half dead,
Lip unbuttoned, step unsure
As the face of him is white and poor.

"Friend, but you look undone,"
Quoth the robber, "you look as one
Unfed for this many a day,
You in your pelt and rag-array,
Inside out as your pockets,
Your closing eyes in their sunken sockets.

"Here, take this gold (and he gave him all),
Have away to an inn to kill
Fatted calf, stuff rib and caul,
Line your hide to the ample fill
To drive off wolf and cold,
Make the most of this bag of gold!"

Nor sooner said than he was gone!
At daybreak on the next day morn

Our guest at the inn is taken
For having, just the day before,
Robbed the Jew of his gold in store
—What Law could be mistaken?—

Are there not strapped to his loins,
By careful count, just the number of coins
Our Jew has lost to a louis d'or
In the same spot on the day before?
What more 's to make a question of?
There 's all proof and perfect enough!

Months have gone their certain way
Till now there comes a day
My man is brought to court to say
Wherefore he should not be sent
For life to damned imprisonment
For looting with hell's intent!

All goes against him, to wit,
The Jew's gold, every louis of it
Found on him, he himself found
At the same hour plump on the ground
Where such rough pillage was done—
What could be clearer below the sun?

Now is the Court about to say
Sentence on him the down-hill way,
When, ere the word could be said,
Like as one just come from the dead,
Bold as Truth to the last resort,
Stands the robber there pat in court:

"I 'm your man! Free that man there!
Never he robbed the Jew a hair,

But I, I plundered this Jew
As God lives and the truth is true,
As there he stands to tell you how
He knows me and my mask on now!

"Came this poor devil to a stop;
I could ne'er stand to see him drop
And my pouch bellied with gold,
He on his way to wolves and cold!
Even so, as there he stands poor and pale,
By Heaven he shall not go to jail!"

So took the sentence himself, half deserved,
Nor whined, nor any little swerved,
But bold as Truth as he said it,
And this Truth stands there to his credit,
As just you look the world over again:
There 's greatness in all kinds of men!

A quoddy in a pool of sea,
So your blinded parson schools,
Thinks by blinking he shall see
How a God in a pike's eye rules,
How a leek to the sky inclines,
How a soul in a thistle shrines,
How a soul in a robber shines!
Yet see—beyond your cream of belief
God dartles in a vulgar thief
To lift him high above you,
You and your Heaven and Hellibeloo!

BOUNTIFUL CANNY'S GRANDDAUGHTER
FROM DULL MOOR

HOSTESS.

Ah, so! From Dull Moor!
Canny's daughter,
The wool-sorter
And sample boor!
Honored, I vow,
To see you now!
But who asked you come
To my kettledrum?
Or what will it hint
And you have a squint
At my guests inside
Who know your hide
Under that streak
Of paint at your cheek,
Under that spinet
Of hustled hair,
Ribbons to pin it,
Fly-combs in it
Like a county fair?
This is nor day,
Nor this the hour
You to have play
With people of power,

Your banner hair
 In the wind to sigh
 As if soul were there
 In the mottled dye,
 Beauty to spare
 In frock and eye!
 You know your place
 In the world outside,
 So why this face
 Of painted pride
 To storm my door,
 You of Dull Moor?

GUEST.

Scarce was needed an invitation that I come
 To your kettledrum,
 I the granddaughter of Bountiful Canny the First
 Who did his worst
 To do his first in the world in this generation
 Of pompous nation,
 Successfulest Canny, my great-grandfather for sure,
 My Prince of Dull Moor!

HOSTESS.

Better you hang outside
 Where the world is wide;
 Like enough my narrow gateway
 Will not broaden to your great way,
 Nor yet to your great name,
 To your kin you claim!
 Have you thought ever how wide
 Is the world outside?

GUEST.

And did you once ever stop short to think,
By way of surprise,
What power there is couched in a buffle's wink
To shut out the skies,
How the thin-ended toe of a coot will put
A whole earth under foot?
See where the brush of a shadow will sweep
The wild world into sleep,
How a throstle's eye in a moment's run
Swallows the sun!
Little is much in the world sometimes,
As there are your chimes,
And now they thrash out a song for joy,
Shout the birth of a boy,
Or again they solemn to cry instead
Their sob for the dead.
Little is much, while as often much is small
Or as nothing for all
You know or think,
So have an eye to the buffle's wink!

HOSTESS.

Your meaning is little plain,
Your purpose unexampled vain,
My kettledrum the town's centre,
So on you berattle
Your twittle-twattle,
But you shall not enter!
You have my word beside
That the world is wide,
Your world outside!

GUEST

So! Yet here is my view
To be looking through:
Littleness counts a count or two,
Since littleness is divine,
Far as I may see,
In the eye of a jacobine,
In the foot of a bee—
So what of you, or what of me,
Or what of what you do,
And there the microbe will bore you through?
In littleness is greatness over all,
Power to the fly-bite and there is no small.
There is how I am come
To your kettledrum,
Mostly to show to you
'Tis superabundant true,
This thing I know by my Canny view.

HOSTESS.

And your meaning?—

GUEST.

Is easy gleanings:
See—this locket—how small,
Scarce the bulk of a rifle-ball,
Yet the tiny modest thing
Has pluck, has a rifle's ring,
Has a will, makes open and shut,
Has knowledge, is full as a nut—
For now I open it—look,
How it opens like a book

To show you, just inside,
 My mother's look before she died—
 Your mother too—her last smile
 With me everywhere, everywhile!

She married a year after your father died—
 You were jostled aside
 The Ash Wednesday night I was born—it was said
 At the time you were dead,
 You of an age, I will say, four and ten,
 Knew nothing of men—
 Your mother my mother, and soon she died,
 I the child at her side.
 Always she held to it you were dead,
 So loved me instead,
 Gave me her heart, her blessing beside
 That day she died,
 Gave me this locket, while just inside it,
 As if to hide it,
 Her face was tucked like a wren in a nest,
 Her last bequest
 Of her sweet look, and she circled the chain
 'Round my neck, as again
 And again she charged that I keep it there
 In my breast, nor dare
 Unchain it ever—that way have I kept,
 If I woke or slept,
 Her image and wishes and all the rest
 In my sorrow-breast.
 One week to a day just after she died
 My father died too;
 They bundled me off to a countryside
 To where I grew

Bountiful Canny's Granddaughter

Among those who knew not the whence I came,
Nor my race and name,
Knew nought of me then, save only this,
It was hit or miss
By chance in my life, nothing for sure,
Only forfeiture
Of parent and friend and land in fee
Now I grew to be
Girl enough in the world to be known
For being alone,
None to care in the whole world wide
If I lived or died.

Up I grew in a careless way,
None to courage me or to say
But I could sprout in my ditch and way,
Take the rough of it at loose ends,
Take kick and cuff and no amends—
I could whistle for luck or friends!
Now came Canny the wool-sorter,
Choice Canny aloof,
Adopted me for granddaughter,
Took me under his roof,
Made much of me, and his lamb-like touch
Of kindness was such
I could not know him for any other
Than father and brother,
The two in one—so much was he soulful
To see me doleful,
My way of life he made over new
And joyful too
As a song-swallow dances in the dew.

Once I asked him why he thought of me,
Made aught of me:

Only he said, in a moment's pause,
 He knew how it was,
This being left in the world to be grown
 Wholly alone,
Not so much as the nod of a friend,
 Nor means to an end
But the single self in him to fight
 For his share of Might—
So was he sorry to see me so,
 See the way I must go,
So took me to him, and I was his child,
 I laughed when he smiled,
I joyed and I grew from that day on
 As his flower in the sun.

What a thing to be
Kind and true as glee!
What a power to do
Your strongest in you
For the good of men,
For sake of what
Is reckoned not
Gluttonous gain,
But only to know
How the world is so
You shall have control
Of life and soul
By your noble view,
By your good in you,
By your good you do!

As if by the awkward pitch
 Of fortune out of a ditch
Canny grew always rich,

Bountiful Canny's Granddaughter

Rich in great man-heartedness,
Be the profit more or less,
Rich to unmatched true,
Unegoed and great he grew
As ever this world dreamed or knew—
Always his kind cottage door,
Always his little store
Free to you or to me,
Life as hard as life could be,
His life, while yet how he toyed
With his ugly fate,
How he was overjoyed
Of such superhuman state
To know his life grew not in vain,
To know he could do his most
And not a thought of what he lost,
Nor any hope of any gain!
Kind Canny, and now gone, and yet part
Of this my everlasting heart!

By such a strange way I was tossed
Aside and lost;
With Canny were refuge and pottage
In his hungry cottage,
Where I was lost sight of and not heard of,
Never a word of
Who I was, whence I came,
What my name—
The while you prospered and were known,
Came to your own,
Was heir to your mother, took what she left,
While I was bereft,
And so you came forward in the world,
Were diamonded, pearled,

As now at the street-edge bubbles the hum
 Of your kettledrum,
And you the Lady of Karat Block
 In your orange frock,
Your fingers in thimbles of silk,
 Your world of that ilk,
You to the front and upward pitch,
 I to my ditch!

One thing strange in the way was this:
 Never I could unlock this locket—
There it shut like a ledge's pocket
 As life went on to jump amiss,
While do my best to coax or knock it,
 By no cunning could I unlock it.
Years go by, page upon page,
 I come to my ripened age,
I find in the world my place
 By Canny, yet not a trace
Of her sweet woman-face
 This locket has held since she died,
And I there crooning at her side.
 Sudden one day, shortly ago,
Now I toyed with the locket, playing
 The cheeks between my fingers, so,
Chain and locket lightly swaying
 As I have done these forty years,
One spring I touched I knew not of,
 Just a touch was sign enough,
When it opened, like two flaps of ears—
 What 's inside it? Now look,
See what is fast in the tiny nook,
 One smallest wad of paper,
Your human destiny-shaper,

Bountiful Canny's Granddaughter

A will—her last testament—
Your Mother's will—that I meant
When I said it could be shown
This locket has a will of its own!

HOSTESS.

My Mother's will?

GUEST.

As life leaps and death is still!
She now believing you to be dead,
For so it was said,
Gave everything—there you may read and see—
Everything to me,
Her manor and all her heap of gold
To have and to hold
To my own use of it for ever,
Nor thought of you ever
As being anywhere left alive
In the world to strive,
But only of me she thought, and so,
As now you may know,
She gave her share of this world to me,
As you read and see!
All you now have of castle or land
Falls to my hand,
Your pot of gold down to each trinket!
Who would think it,
I, the castaway of Dull Moor,
Now rich and you poor!
I that was lost, I that am found,
Now wait to be crowned
Mistress of chance, queen of the dance!—
Is it not curious circumstance?

HOSTESS.

Yet are we sisters—is 't not so?
 Will you cast me to the world away
 As you were cast once, nor care to know
 If I prosper any day,
 Nor take of me a thought
 If I dwindle and prosper not?
 What was mine is now yours, as I see—
 Will you, then, snatch all my world from me?

GUEST.

Your one way of life you know,
 To hold what you have, nor let go
 The scrub-end of it, but only to hold
 To your trinkets, your fathom of gold:
 More than this ever have you learned
 Among your pleasant ways you turned
 And pitiness withered and heart died
 Of too much sun? Will my cyclamen blow
 In only the sunny side,
 Never a cloud? That much I know
 By my way I was meant to go
 To get the storm-side of life,
 To value the value of strife.

I learned love of Canny,
 By his love I grew;
 His riches were many,
 So was he kind and true
 As his pickings were poor
 By the ditch of Dull Moor,
 Till I saw what is great
 Does not come of your state

Of lusher you thrive in,
Your castle you hive in,
But will wrestle alone
As a flower on the throne
Of its purple cone
Will angle to pitch
White stripes from a ditch.
Canny gave me love,
Which was riches enough;
Gave me power to do
My whole life through
What is strong and true—
So here 's my hand to you
And my heart to you
And my soul to you,
As all I have is yours
More than it is mine—
Do I count soul by scores,
Are ducats divine?
Together are we
In eternity
Sisters forever,
This world never
To hang between us—
Just my love shall unscreen us!

My love I got of Canny
I give it all to you;
Hard knocks are many,
Kindnesses few;
My life I give to live it,
My life I live to give it,
All of it to you,
All my gold-heap too!

Life has spirit in it,
There 's the thing in view
And never in sight,
I to work to win it
By Majesty of Right!
Let the way be rough,
Love is enough!

And now may I come
To your Kettledrum?

MABEL MAPLETON

TAKE love one way or another,
 Love of sweetheart or only brother,
Love of the roundest tapered arm
 Or kind lip of spirit-charm,
Whether I long for one breast-embrace
 Or to look just into some soulsome face,
Love is love, no matter the name,
 The world over and ever the same.

But which way soever soul be gloved,
 If cat-pawed or manned or doved,
Somewhat there must be to be loved,
 Somewhat to bring you too
To comprehend how love is true
 Beyond the knowledge or will of you,
How it will come without your call
 While you may not know you love at all.

Under her hill in her bramble-patch
 My girl-friend lived—I have heard her say
She loved her life her cottage-way
 She lived, loved the yellow thatch—
Each footprint of each throstle-jay
 She knew, knew his time of day
He took to unbottle his best
 Wild song just to be her heavenly guest.

So well I knew her, she would say
 Her heart to me, tell me each day
Each little thing she wrought or thought
 Righted her or righted her not,
Her small cares, her largest hopes
 The way a young girl grieves and gropes
To try to compass each doll-dream end,
 While so I grew to be all her friend.

How now I think how we would sit
 By her door of an evening, she to tell
What she did that day so well,
 What the wonderment of it
To think she could do her best
 Her girl-way and never a thought
Of an atom of gain to be got
 But soul, which was gaining on its nest.

Soon came her hour to love, so now
 She knew she loved her city-man
Of perfect gait, of angle-bow,
 Outwardness plummet-spick and span,
He of the cue-cut scallopy plan,
 Of glassy boot, as if to incline
Her thinking so she should divine
 He meant one end of him should shine.

So too he took pretty ways,
Could jingle-tinkle her praise
 Bell-pot manner, the love he felt
By no means thicker than his pelt,
 While so he would coil and prance
To toss her his chipmunk glance
 To dazzle—just boot and shin
Were masterpieces, sure to win.

By what she saw of him the more
She loved him—never before
Grew man that perfect—there looked his tie
The round tint to match her eye,
Each elbow-dip of little passes
Sweet was and smooth as new molasses,
He talented, as this world goes,
To tickle fortune by his toes.

The other, his rival, was otherly made,
Had a slowness to press his claim,
Half-spoken, would take to the shade
Of quiet merit, nor thought of fame
Or fortune, thought only to do
His most in the world, manful-true
To what was noblest in him, by which
He grew greatness and spirit-rich.

Rather than force himself forward he
Would keep his soul-ground, would yield his place
To the other—for that cause she
Saw never what man-hearted grace,
What temple of Heaven was in his face,
What there was of him to be,
So missed the soul in him, and so
Was now about to let him go,

Was about to take her city-prize,
Mostly for his boots and eyes,
For life-mate, when next I drew
Her thought to the other, how he was true
As stars are, who played his part
Of strong soul and gentle heart,
Not so much to win
As to stand man-like through thick or thin.

Could she love a man, she said,
Just because he was true or great?
Love is perverse, will not be led,
Will hold to its course at any rate
For love only, not for the sense
Of soul which a man may claim,
Since love is all its own recompense,
Is scarcely more than a name

For keen reasonless passion
Which pants to break into storm,
One wild whim, ever out of fashion
Since ever refusing to conform
To any way which is best,
Starving to be put to the test—
So she would love her man for what
He lacked most, accomplished not;

Would love him for his puky wit,
For just his way he took to spit—
Grew he one wart to his nose,
She should call it her Bourbon-rose,
Die for love of it, God knows!
How to talk to her I knew
Quite as little as do you
How to make a cipher two.

This much she would say of the other:
He was not more to her than brother;
Kind goodness, nobleness were his,
Fine as the dew-dahlia is;
Kept the courage of his kind,
Heart and soul and truth of mind,
Yet be what he might, her heart was so
She could not love him, whether or no.

Mabel Mapleton

Mark how little she knew
Her heart the while it grew
Wider and deeper too,
For next day only it was said
He whom she could not love was dead—
Gone of an instant, like as men drop
Out of season—gone is the prop
Before there comes once a thought to stop!

Death opens eyes, opens hearts,
Has a new world to reveal—
Now she could see and feel
How soul clings when body departs,
How the best of you will sleep
Only that it may grow
Sun behind clouds that weep,
For love will have it so.

Now he was gone she could see
What breath was his supremacy
Of great heart, handsome soul,
Saw the light in him and whole
High hope and purpose of power
For noblemost in his life of an hour—
Came to her now his noon-high smile,
How he loved her so all the while,

Till there her true heart opened out,
She could see no other about
Save him who was borne away
To yonder corn-colored violet day—
She found love in her, found what grew it
Was love in him—there's my rhyme:
She loved him and never knew it,
Loved him all the time.

AFRAID OF ME?

THIS tree has a robin-top
Of so many birds
Of such singing words
And not a thought of them to stop,
I thought and I said, Why may not I
Perch where they perch in the tree-leaves high?
"Yes," but I said, "they will fly away
Once they hear my human notes I play!"

"Ah, but I sing truth," I said,
And the truth is fine
As their columbine
Or any lip of orange-red,
While song is only the single touch
Of Beauty, and so the case is such
I sing truth like my birds in their glee,
So why should they be afraid of me?"

They sing their way as I mine,
So what of the art
Or pleasure-part
So they point aloft to a thing divine
Above human, and so above art,
One bursting forth of one mighty heart
Too full to keep, like sun in a gem,
So why should I be afraid of them?

Afraid of Me?

As there they are free to sing,
Each heart to his choice
Of bells for voice,
Yet I tied down to rope and ring
To beat the bars of this cage of thought,
Nor higher than the cage is wrought,
Small wonder, if once they look to see,
They should be so afraid of me!

So came one over-blue day
Of such amber sun
As is overrun
By not a cloud—I took my way
To my robin-top tree, for just there
Each bird was tossing his song in air
Till I would think, nor chance to choose,
The inside soul of sweet Heaven was loose.

High in my tree I was now,
My birds were flown,
I there alone
To send my song from this elbow-bough!
They would come again, my robins would,
For I sing only my new other mood,
Which is truth, my truth in melody,
So why should they be afraid of me?

Yet sing as I would my best,
Never bird would come
To my gladsome hum
To take my truth, to be my guest—
Afraid of me, 'though I whistle truth,
As if I were only claw and tooth,
And I my own unique-minded glee—
Why should they be so afraid of me?

Right as I lounged in my bough
 To hark to each wheeze
 Of lullaby-breeze
 Which makes such music, none knows how,
 Just at the foot of the tree there came
 My Eunice, youth in her cheek for flame,
 Begged me I come down out of my sky
 Now day was gone and the winds would die.

"Not so," said I, "but do you
 Climb up to me here
 Where sight is clear
 And I have much the larger view
 To round my truth to each rounded sky;
 My look is off as my perch is high,
 More I may compass the sky around
 Than you shall get in your grubbish ground."

"Too high for me," she would say,
 Such unstable top
 And I see it lop
 Like an ear too tired to hear you play!
 Not used am I to your lookout there
 Of such countless suns in such boundless air,
 So I should be afraid to look
 Beyond my Pequot-pasture brook."

"Afraid of me too, my friend,
 'Though I sing how truth
 Keeps an endless youth,
 And you fear to look where there is no end,
 'Though I sing in these champak leaves
 Which drop such rain-gold off the eaves!
 Is it because of my light to see
 That you should be so afraid of me?"

Afraid of Me?

"Come to my bough in this tree
For such light as is here,
For such look-out clear—

What harm shall come if you look to see?

More are you than my birds which are gone,
More too than any sky-top dawn,
More is always to look to to be,
So why will you be afraid to see?

"Truth holds no harm for you here,
'Though you give your youth
To your love of truth!

Nought which is noble has aught to fear,
So hold to one truth, which is this:

Yonder sky is no precipice

Down which to tumble—that much I see,
So why this fear of eternity?"

ENDLESSNESS

COME to see the river,
Little girl,
Half a-quiver,
All a-whirl!
What a way
It takes to play
To be clever,
Comes and goes
As the snows,
Yet the end of it is never!

Have a look to watch it
For a while,
Every crotchet
Like a smile,
Every rimple
Makes a dimple
Deep as ever
Where it purls,
Spreads and furls,
Yet the end of it is never!

Look to how my garden
Comes and goes,
Tucks a nard in
Or a rose

Endlessness

For a season
And no reason
But to scatter
Pink and sweet,
Life complete,
And this dying cannot matter.

A linnet in his clover
For a song
Sings it over
Twice as long
As his glottis
Or his thought is,
Whistles more
For me to quote,
Note by note,
Than his life he has in store.

What is there to capture
In a day
But the rapture
Of his lay
As he bubbles
Above troubles
High and strong,
Never sighing
At this dying,
For his sighing is his song.

You are very little,
Little girl;
Life is brittle
As a pearl;
I am older,
Stronger, bolder

Than you ever,
 Yet the thyme is
 More than time is,
 Like the end of love is **never**.

Just a little waiting
 I will do
 To be mating
 Yet with you!
 You shall learn to
 Pulse and burn too
 In a while,
 For this truth is
 Young as youth is:
 Love goes never out of style.

What if there be ages
 Yet ahead,
 Endless pages
 To be read,
 Shall I lessen
 By my lesson
 In the end?
 How I smallen
 And have fallen
 To gain a world and lose a **friend!**

You shall come to soul me
 By and by,
 Come to dole me
 Lap of sky,
 As I fashion
 Love, not passion,

Endlessness

Makes for power,
Makes for master
And long-laster,
More than spousals of an hour.

I can wait the ages
Yet for you;
Love engages
What is true,
And my truth is
More than youth is,
More to be,
More to go to
And to know too,
You to one day come to me.

Come to see the river
Made of showers,
See it quiver
Into flowers!
There it ranges,
Chops and changes
All as ever,
As this love does,
Soul above us,
Yet the end of it is never.

IN A MIRROR

How long ago was it?—one moment:

I took a day to dodge the foment
And kick of the world!

Old Lantern Hill was a place to see,
Dew was ripe, sea-swallows whirled
In the wing for free.

Such a blue sky above head was now

As to put me asking when and how
I could be there too

To look up always from high to higher,
Become one part of the blazing blue
Deep wonder entire.

Brilla was there at my side her way,

Half between seriousness and play
As a sweet girl will,

Now at her glee, then again thinking
Life is more than this daffodil
Pinking and winking.

Brilla was all of my world to me!

We took the hill in hand just to see
How the world below

Must look, and we so above in air
As to see far down and to never know
Fribble or care.

In a Mirror

Up we went, by the longest way too,
While steep it is as I ever knew,
Yet wonder to tell,
Never we turned once nor took one stop
Till we were where the white winds yell
At the bull-horn top.

You know old Lantern Hill how it is,
One perpendicular precipice
One side, one straight ledge
Clean cut down to the lake below,
Plunging in deep at the water's edge
As the waters go!

Down we sat at the very top,
Glad of such certain cocklofty prop,
I close to her side
To watch her soft-shell cap of red,
Her rose-look in which I took such pride,
Or her hand instead.

How now she twined her fingers in mine
As wine-flowers cling in their knuckled vine
And I drew her to me,
Put her sweet face to my heart my way
Till I thought my love of her would undo me
That wonderful day!

I pointed high in the sky above,
So many worlds to be thinking of,
Yet never is one
For man, I said; he is under the sky,
So like all things under the sun,
Meant only to die.

"You do not mean so, " she said, "I know,
For see the lake how it has such glow
Like a plate of glass
To take a print of the whole wide sky
And will not let a little cloud pass
Or moon go by!

"The sky you see in the lake down there
Is each way perfect and all as fair
As is overhead,
So, if the truth of things be given,
Man, in spite of his narrow bed,
Is surcingle by Heaven.

"Overhead or under water there
Just one Heaven is everywhere,
Is about you too
Each any way you shall try to see,
So how will you escape from such blue
Bright eternity?"

How long ago! How life goes by!
How could I think she was meant to die
So soon, so young,
Her red cheek of the cardinal flower,
Her way she visioned and loved and sung
In her morning hour?

I look down from the same spot still
Into her blue lake under the hill
To find, shall I say,
Only the star-fields mirrored there
And she gone, she who was more than they
By soul so fair?

In a Mirror

But not so far away is she gone
 Soon as I take to thinking on
How she spoke that day:
 Man has about him all Heaven in touch,
Which is Beauty at eternal play,
 While Truth is such

As Beauty is, each is here to stay,
 And so I carol and keep my way
Since this much I know:
 She was one part of one perfect whole,
So, whichever way I choose to go,
 Her high bright soul

Still stays, as Beauty about me stays,
 For see how sky changes worlds and ways,
Yet Beauty remains
 As does the glint in an eagle's quill,
Whichever way the rachis trains,
 Barb-ends spill!

The soul of her, such beautiful part,
 All there is of this mind and heart,
Is by me as now
 I look down in the water-glass,
Or up through this sapodilla bough
 Where new clouds pass

And stop again, to show me one law:
 Beauty is all they are making for,
So I hold to this,
 The one thing first in the last I see:
Beauty and Beauty make all there is
 To grow to to be!

IN A DREAM

JUST a little book,
Just a tiny leaf
In a narrow nook
And the tale is brief:
Just a tiny book,
But it held my hands
Like a gullet-hook,
As he understands
Who knows the grip and neaf
Of such tiny leaf.

What a thing it is in the world to be free,
How much it means in the end to me,
Myself to completely be!

Yet no self I saw
Now the spotted claw
Took hold like an asp,
Kept its place and clasp
At my throat and lung
Just to tie my tongue
So I should not speak
Nor a thought should leak,
I there for fact
To be tricked and sacked!

A little more truth always waits to be known!
How may I grow in your chancel-zone
As I was meant to be grown?

In a Dream

Such a dream I had,
Such an ugly sight
So hellishly bad
Just the other night,
I could not tell you
The half, nor spell you
One part of it true
As the sick sight was
Of a putrid blue
In a dead man's claws!

One moment I ask for one proper full breath
To tell you how near he is to death
Who neither looks nor reasoneth!

In my soundest sleep
This thought, all at once,
Took my soul to keep:
I was half the dunce,
Could not think my wit,
Knew less to say
Than a parrot's twit,
Than a muzzled jay,
And the reason was,
For I knew the cause—

One moment, for I must pluck muscle to tell
The terror of it and perfect hell,
And my loss of myself as well—

One monster white bug,
Big as a crab,
Took the whim to tug
At my brain, to stab,

To suck my thought
 By his vampire-bite,
 To smother my lot
 And self out of sight
 By a single sting
 Of his poison wing,
 By his nasty strut
 In my soul and gut.

There he lay at my brain at the dead of night,
 His wings were black, his body white,
 All only to suck and to bite.

Not a jot I knew
 Of why he was there
 Now I slowly grew
 To less than a hair
 In the span of me
 Till the man of me
 Was weak, in the main,
 As my cry of pain,
 Was small, on the whole,
 As the spider's soul.

What a terrible blame of life to incur
 That you, however you right or err,
 Have come to less than you were!

Thought I this bug grew
 To know how to chew,
 Was all mouth too
 To open out wide
 Till I saw inside
 Black teeth there to grind
 On my soul and mind

In a Dream

As I felt their bite
Between black and white
In the dead of night.

Take me to task, if you will, for my thinking
Man is nobler rising than sinking,
You at your altar-kinking!

Shall I once lose sight
Of such bites and stings,
Of such body white
Between two black wings,
All mouth open wide,
Black teeth inside?
Long as I live
Shall I once forgive
The thrust at my heart
Of this devil's art?

What is there left of a man to a pout,
Less than a pimple-dot, do you doubt,
And this self-soul of him left out?

There now as I lay
To think I was gone,
Came the red end of day
In painted dawn,
Came a girl to my side
So she touched my cheek—
It was Truth, my bride,
My power to speak
A word for her sake
And I was awake.

One touch of Truth and the world is awake
To see and rise and undertake
What is true for Supremity's sake.

Just a fatted book
Was the bug in sight,
Was the thought I took
And its poison-bite
As I lay in sleep
And my book in hand
Forbade me to speak
Or to understand,
Save to sleep to reach
What the teeth should teach.

Have a way of seeing and all light will come!
No darkness like being deaf and mum!
Gods there no God shall strike you dumb!

PAPER DOLLS

I KNEW once a dozen city girls
Bright and round as a string of pearls,
Dancing eyes in dancing curls,
Laughed as the sun in a river laughs,
Open-handed, nothing by halves!
How the laugh of a dozen girls swells
Into chime-song of marriage bells!

Light as air was the thought they had,
Nothing good in it, nothing bad
As words flew by the myriad
To tune the wind, and I never heard
More than the tickling silver word
To tell how lightly soul may breathe
If hearts tick nothing underneath.

How should I but listen to their song
Long as any day is long?
How could there be any wrong?
Shall I not hark to each lightest breeze
Teaching language to the trees?
I know the flicker of each leaf and love it
For the nothing there is of it.

Now the flap-end of a ruff
Is pink, or shows a melted puff,
Which is food for thought enough!

A thing to aim to for noble place
Is pomegranate leaf in Limerick lace,
Shy slippers in rainbow green,
Enough to talk of and be seen!

Do I not watch my tumble-bee bob,
See him butt at his rose to mob
The new pink, or hob and nob
With sweet and turn himself twice over
Pumping juice from his field of clover?
So too I watch my dozen girls cheep
And flutter in one honey heap.

Comes now my Julie to find me there,
Is jealous that I pay such care
To such light girls, never spare
One look to her if she amble by
More than I see the perfect sky
Which is so all 'round me so
I have it if I look or no.

"Ah," but she thought, "I 've a trick to trim!
Why not I play paper-doll-whim
Since the role so pleases him?
Catch a man by the bait he likes,
As you sniggle breams or pikes!
Here 's a girl dangles her ribbon-strings—
He loves her for the silver wings!"

Next day, now the sun was so high
I missed my shadow's company,
I thought me: What if I try
To find my Julie—fate could not err
If I could be the shadow of her!
What is there in any darksome place
To light you like the bright one face?

Paper Dolls

But where I looked I could find her not;
Was she hidden, had she half forgot
My love of her was my only thought?
Just where the sun in the city square purls,
There she cheeped with my dozen girls
To show her pill-dotted shawl, her gem
Of jasper like any of them.

She thought—you know how each new girl thinks
You judge her by her prinks and blinks,
Her wasp-waist or finger-links—
She thought, once I looked to these girls,
I loved their pompadour quirk of curls,
So reasoned I must likewise love them,
Each for the jacket of honeycomb hem.

Up she stood in the midst of them all
To talk me parrot-talk quite as small
As sizzle in a tea-pot squall,
As if to find, in the end, her man
Mapped a sort of paper-doll plan
Of his own, on which he was made—
And so her pretty trap was laid!

“Ah,” but I said, “you have found a way
To speak less than your great eyes say
By their down-deep spirit-play!
Or there is that plum-red in each cheek
Like lips with more than they can speak!
Or over all is the white high brow,
Which thinks, as only I know how!

Did you think I could not read below
Makeshift or little pebble-show
By what I see of you and know,

Such a spirit in such a wreath,
 Such wondrous great heart underneath
 In sky-pattern, gillyflower grace,
 As puts all fashion out of place?

Let the world jump to its red and blue
 Bubble-fuss of ambigu,
 I claim just the heart of you,
 So well I know you among them all—
 Never true greatness seemeth small!
 So put aside that green garnet star,
 I love you for only what you are!

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c .

PINK APPLE POINT

SUCH another place one would not see by walks
Where the peevish sea pouts or north wind stalks
To try to run down a flock of hawks,
Such a rare point of peculiar land
Of shape quite of a kinkajou's hand,
Head like a rock-onion, while out of the top
Runs a light like an eye in a druggist-shop,
One clear pink light, round as an apple,
For keeping the whole coast in its grapple,
While there as I look ^{'t} I could not tell you
Half the heart of it or belle-view.

This was the lighthouse I saw,
Head up to Heaven, nor a flaw
Had the eye of it more than a kohinoor;
Fire was the warning it threw
Across such big stomach of blue
As sailors must duck to pay homage to.

In the little lantern chamber at the top
Sat a girl, and she would never leave the light
While a single star above her tried to stop
To look at her, like morning's second sight;
Took her place there just at evening by the lamp
As a gunner at his gun, so never knew
What a pinch of sleep was or a camp
While there were love and duty there to do;

Kept her watches all as long as any night,
Kept the wild high ocean fountains full in sight—
If any ship should happen to be losing
Her course, or graze the bottom in her cruising,
There should come a look of light to make it plain
Not an eye is small enough to look in vain.

Such a handsome girl is she,
Leaps of spirit in her eyes,
Words like bells of melody,
Such a look of glad surprise
For pleasure in every joint
To see you at Pink Apple Point!
At her lamp-light she will sit,
Never gives the world a thought
For the paltry praise of it,
Hugs her narrow prison-spot,
Hugs the pelted rays of it,
Looks and lives there just alone,
Sleeves put back for solemn care,
Arms of alabaster bare,
Brow of the spirit zone.

Made for him the sweet girl was.
Her sailor across the seas;
Love makes always double cause,
Fights to capture and please.
He is gone and her heart will burn—
Will he ever return?
How she looks to the seas out there!
How they return her stare!
What is colder than a grave of brine,
Or so bottomless and undivine

Pink Apple Point

Till I stop to think: There 's one end,
But there must be the other, my friend,
Two ends to divinity,
One dark end with not a spark
Only to give me my chance to see—
I dig for light through pits of dark!

Alone in her castle of fire
She knew but the one desire
To stand firm to her post,
Do her best and most
For love of Right
All her might,
While so

She could be seen to come and go
Once in every day or so
For oil to keep her light
Forever in sight,
Made her way
Day and day
To town,

Never the thin end of a frown
Even 'though her luck was down,
As now it looked to be
And her man at sea,
Her lonely lot
Now she thought
Such life

As hers made only hopeless strife,
Never to be noble wife
To him she loved, and so
Days must come and go,

Never an end
Nor a friend—
And yet

One thing is never to forget:
Purple hugs the violet!
There is her heart to do
To be greatly true
For not a stain,
Not a gain
In view—

So she shall wear the purple too!
One brave true thing was to do,
Nor to care what should come
Of the hum and drum,
Nor give a thought
To her lot
But this,

To be true as the north star is,
And what shall the whole soul miss
Of all there is to think?
I catch, by a wink,
Millions of suns,
And so runs
My heart

Always beyond the body-part
And this little planet-chart
To what is endless fair
As the Dog-Star stare
Of green and blue,
Always new
And true!

Pink Apple Point

One strange thing in her life was this:
 After dark there was never to miss
One strange man, and he always came
 After dark to the lighthouse steeple—
Secret were his nature and name,
 None knew of him among the people,
Only his purpose was to rapture
 The lighthouse girl so he could capture
Heart and soul of her to make her his,
 So his after-dark plot was this,
To bring her orange-tree flowers would scatter
 Their lips in her lap because he knew
They spoke, with never word to flatter,
 What was sublime in her. One time too
He brought her larkspur to try to match
 Her blue eyes, yet was never thinking
What soul was there between the winking
 Which was not his, so he could not catch
Her thought by his fascination-power,
 Nor touch her heart with one winter flower.
Stood not her sailor on yonder sea!
 What counted these flowers, or any plea,
And she star-pointer to see her way
 To her man across seas and away?

What is it not my man will do
 To gain his point if he forget
The Right of a thing is the Soul of it too
 To trip his trick and quodlibet?

For who shall say he holds such power
 As will crush out Beauty, once he sees
Green stripes which die in his faded flower
 Live in the stars and tumbling seas

From which they came, so each soul flies
 To you or me to perch a while,
Yet nests to breed where Beauty never dies,
 Nor soul is ever out of style?

Thus this man thought he could have his way,
 His little way in his little day
By force to bring her to his terms,
 And his way so small as the way of worms!

Here was the month of June,
 She should marry him next day noon,
Or by the light of the nightfall-moon
 She should be locked in her lantern-tower
This very night and this very hour
 To know his will and his pinch of power!

Oil in her lamp should sizzle down,
 The glass should crock as the light died out,
She should no more make her way to town,
 His word for it, and not a doubt
Her oil should fail, her lamp die out!

Lives how many should be tossed
 Ashore, how many should be lost
For not a light to be seen
 Where always a light had been
In the lighthouse tower to save
 Sea-lords from their water-grave!

“Point me to my honeymoon,
 Marry me to-morrow noon,
You shall be free in return
 So your lighthouse light shall burn
To leap, like a savior of men,
 To their rescue again and again!

Pink Apple Point

"Marry me not, then shall you stay
Prisoner here many a day,
The while any ship may dock
Her load of souls in yonder rock
And you no oil in your litter
By which this lamp may spit and glitter."

Enough said—she could not see
Souls put in eternity
For want of a handful of light!
Such was her kingdom of Right
She should be brave to do
What was noble of her through
To misery in the last ditch—
Right is always kingdom-rich.

"Take me," she said, "I am yours
To have for these few human hours
Of life as you show it,
As you value and I know it—
To church to-morrow, my word
I wed you at the noon-top hour
My marriage-bells are heard—
Am I not in your power,
Goes there aught for me to do
But pay my homage, sir, to you?"

Next day at the altar they both stood:
"Your name?" said the priest!
"Donald Beltraven, or at least,
So have I ever understood
My name was—both parents died
Ere I was old enough to know

Names from knuckles, and beside,
What 's in a name if poppies blow
What 's in a name if I have the bride?"

"Much in a name as a name is much,
As see me put it to the touch,"
Said the priest, "now I ask her name
For you to find it half the same
As yours—Beltraven—I know you both—
Celia Beltraven, as on my oath
I christened each of you at this font
As infants, as by common wont
These parish records have nothing lacked—
You are brother and sister for fact!"

That night what shoots of fire put forth
From the lighthouse east and north
Like her heart leaped as if it would flee
Over and over all the sea
To one, her sailor, who was gone forth
Into the whip of the seas,
Into the black angry north
To take his chance, like the rest of these—
He has wandered away and away!
Would he never come back one day?

Another year you shall see them sitting
Cottage-covered, next her pretty fire,
Song-swallows in the roof are knitting
Nests of sunshade in ivy wire,
Her rye-field 'round her; her strong man,
Now at his meridian,
Now at the sea no more,
Clasps her at their cottage door
For love of her, while such light

Pink Apple Point

Comes from his eyes as she shall see
Reckons with eternity—
Her light she threw to him into the black
She gets now and thousand-fold back—
Always one step higher in sight
As come the evening suns,
Corvus falters, Auriga runs,
While they look up and around,
Watch each calycanthus grow
Or sumac so they shall know
Beauty is meant to leave the ground—
There she shall live to love in sight
Of one sea of eternal light—
Mark the Royalty of Right!

Oh, brother, there's the nature of things!
See throughin and throughout it,
As who shall doubt it,
Right is a Kingdom if Men be Kings!

VALERIE FAY

ONLY to think of it that she is dead,
Laid cold and straight in her straight cold hall!
A few slain flowers to droop about her head,
A few slow hands to dress her bed,
And of all that was once of her, this is all!

Only to think the days will come no more
Just to knit narcissus in her cheeks;
To put their purple bells against her door,
Carol to her, o'er and o'er,
Or catch the linnet listening when she speaks!

You were young and quick at gain, Valerie Fay,
Laying hold on your world with a will;
A heart which was whole months of May,
A soul to outwit the clay,
And, lo, the warm wild breath stands cold and still!

Young and quick at gain—you were very young,
Loved him as only youth may love;
You thought the very soul was strung
Along the treble of his tongue,
You dreamed the rose he brought was love for love!

Friends told how he was false as hollow chaff
In a puff of wind to whine his cause;
They wondered much how you could stoop to quaff
The mockery of his shallow laugh,
Nor see what lordly sham was all he was.

But here was truth—you loved—just that was all
Of thought which drifted from heart to head;
You would not hark to catch the louder call
Of one who loved you most of all—
My love was nothing to you, so you said.

You loved him for yourself—such was enough:
What mattered if he loved you not?
What, too, 'though he were made of stuff
Which underneath the mock was rough?
Little hollow cares and soon forgot!

Here is the law: Not for thyself alone,
Not one half a step in life's few days!
So wholly near together are we grown,
Since Love once made the world his own,
There 's just the step aside to wondrous maze.

But just to think of it that she is gone,
Gone out of my hopefulest young day!
Not another star is in yonder dawn,
Nor other trust of earth to be born,
For I loved you and loved you, Valerie Fay!

NO DEATH

AFRAID of death,
He who reasoneth?

The arms of the skies
Laid me in the grass;
Soon I began to rise;
Each day tried to pass,
Yet came 'round to me again
Till I learned joy and pain,
Joy because it came,
Pain because it went,
One finger of flame
Out of the firmament
To point to me straight,
To point always to me
So I could wholly see
Power is far and great
As eternity,
Power to you, Power to me!

What is the way of the world to go
If all I am is what I know
Of how balloon vines climb and blow?
To-day are they white, another day red,
And yet another and they are dead.
Do I climb and I bloom to-day,

No Death

And another day I call a halt,
As if there were nothing more to say
And I had no nobler game to play
Than life at its little puff of fault?

You 've a way of thinking
You are more than what
Puts you snoozing, winking,
Tickles rib or thought!
There 's your rare voice, mine 's the same,
So hold you to it, play the game!

He was my schoolfellow, he who died
So young, while I was younger yet—
Who is there ever could forget?
We together so side by side,
He of the great noble brow and eye
Of such faultless beautiful gaze
I knew spirit nested in his face,
Something of him not meant to die,
His hand in mine, and boy-like we galloped
Across field—each wall was scalloped
Ashes of roses, each wejack about
Kept close quarters, hopped in and out,
The titlark gave an after-shout
Of rapture, whistle and gong,
As if he plauded his own song—
On we rushed, all after nought
But the rough wind in one butternut knot
Of branches we mouth-watered for—
How a boy's heart throbs in his craw!
Flowers we gathered and gathered grasses—
Time stays and life passes,
Till soon, how soon I lost him—he went on

Before his May month was begun,
Felt his way out and beyond me,
Death unwilling to unbond me,
And so I walk in my field alone
To think this only: My friend is gone.

Is he gone, my friend,
And there the end
Of what was incomplete,
His days so new and sweet
And yet not ended,
Were scarcely begun
To be comprehended
Before they were done,
As my eyes see it,
This life meant to be,
He not meant to be it—
Is that all I see,
And so much of him there,
More than is found
In this pompous ground
Or trunk of air?

He went so soon,
I stay so long;
Barely one June
Had dropped its song
Of the kingbird cry
To tempt him to fly
Ere he breathed to die!
Do I wait for him,
Does he wait for me?
Comes time or limb
Of infinity?

No Death

My life is incomplete
Without his joys,
His hands and feet
My pretty toys,
His cymbal voice
On the trombone wind
And I made my choice—
Has the good God sinned?

The child was he, and he died;
The man am I, and I live on now;
My life, therefore, is it so wide,
And he of the noble eye and brow
To compass such Beauty anyhow
Only to breathe an hour and he died?

Once to the grass he stooped,
Picked for me one dead leaf
Where once the north wind swooped
And slashed beyond belief—
He put this truth to me:
What is this leaf to see
More than deformity,
More than wrinkles to pout
Now the red and green are torn out?
Or where are they gone
To be no more seen
That I feasted on,
The red and the green?
Were they made to die
And this leaf to stay?
But there is my sky
Of shadowless day;
There 's my perfect blue

To the last end true
To my look, and too,
That I may not say
My universe,
For better or worse,
Is not come to stay!
Looked he this truth to me,
His truth which was plain;
All that I think to see
Will come again,
For the green and the red
Are gone, yet not dead,
For now I have them again.
In this moonlight rain.

There is the other soul of me
 Never man was meant to see,
Over-ground and over-much,
 I not to count it among my beads,
Not for me to taste or touch,
 Has more than the ground-worm needs,
Is more than stomach and clutch,
 For he is with me now,
Much as he once was then,
 My friend of the wondrous eye and brow
Above worldish ways, human ken,
 He with me as I with him,
And it matters not, this knuckle or limb
 Or loop of thought between friends—
Much begins where little ends.

True, I may not see;
True, I may not touch;
Soul is meant to be,
Death is meant for much

No Death

As dark glass on the eyes
To help me see the skies;
Power is meant for such
As I to have and to hold
And no growing old,
Nor any loss of size—
In yonder endless wold
Worlds nor fall nor rise—
Death to help me to see,
Death to point me to be
One grain of eternity—

And there lies my tiny schoolfellow friend
In his garden yonder!
I walk to the flower-path end
As now I think of him and wonder
How or where he may be, or what
That I dream of not,
And I by his little resting-spot
Take his dead leaf out of my breast
He gave me that day,
His leaf of wrinkles and croppen crest;
The green and the red have gone their way,
Which I look to find,
As over beyond I see where they lie
And I never divined,
My green and my red on the evening sky.

So to him who reasoneth
As the sweet soul seasoneth,
Purely for surely there is no death
To the upward eye, heavenly breath.

CRAFT

I

HELP yourself, my friend,
 Never you mind me!
Push your purpose to an end
 For all you can see!
You have your cunning sight,
 Your blizzard-bite,
Your hog-inkling each way
 You grunt and pray!
Never you took bother
 About man or brother
For half a look to see
 How best to do or be,
So never you mind me!

II

Nor you mind that man there on his knees
 With a Bishopric to please!
He licks a priest's knuckles,
 Thinking that way to win God,
Whimpers and trims and truckles
 While they grind him into the sod!
Never he got a chance to think,
 Nor eye open enough to wink,

While you have him, you and your priest,
Like a combination-beast
To swallow him whole,
Body and soul!

III

Help yourself, help heavily,
Do your trick cleverly;
Take the world for a dish
So you dip every wish
To one mouthful-purpose
To stuff your gullet like a porpoise
By imbroglio and fallace,
Make your home in a palace
Above the green-swept sod
Wholly because you can
By your thinking-pan,
Wholly for the love of God,
Never for the love of man.

IV

You and your partner priest,
He to keep me for dear dunce
Ignorant of my rights of man,
Keep the thought of me policed
—What like ignorance blights, stunts?—
There 's your sublime altar-plan!
Have you thought that acolyte
Reaches ever his full height
To think and blossom and feel
And he under your kick and heel?

Take him off of your closet-shelf,
Stand him straight to be himself,
All the good great soul of him—
Your one way to get the whole of him!

v

But to come back to me—
Never you mind me a whit,
I have only myself to be
Squarely for the love of it
And not for that bribe of yours
Which tickles and gores,
Your crown of life, your price in view
To buy me to be true.

vi

This girl I knew died in a pit,
Your dungeon, if you told the truth,
And, oh, the monstrous pity of it
She should be lost in her handsome youth!
She had a lover—I knew him too—
Straight he was and handsome through
As any soul-stalk ever grew; —
Bore himself, as each heart should,
Building universal good,
Kind as Christmas, one desire
To lift his world a fathom higher
Than pit-grovelling to see how
Low a man shall make his bow
To tickle the God above him,
As if that made the Majesty of him!

VII

You should have seen them an afternoon
Together, any day of June,
Bon Silene flowers in hand
They could understand,
Sun-gold counted into spots
By fathoms of forget-me-nots!
Each bird matched his lemon breast
With rye-rods, and crest to crest
He footed it and sang his best!
There was nothing to think for fear,
Not any bottling of thought up, here,
Only the wild free heart was dear!
Evening would come, the true full moon
Looked softer, like an eye of June;
The same love too, which was always
Used to no bottlement or small ways,
Took language, high above any speech,
More than man to man may teach,
As each was lost in the love of each.

VIII

Then you came, you and your priest,
Bound to separate the two,
Her lover to make monk, at least
So you planned, your priest and you,
To tie his brain by your knots,
Make monk of him, set him tuning
His spirit-notes to your babooning
To glossen among empty pots.
You took the man out of him, short order,
Brought him to your canon border,

Muzzled his nose like an ox,
Put his thinking in your stocks—
So you contrived to new-whelp him
To your purpose, and God help him!

IX

She, the fine lover-girl, came next,
Took a leaf out of your text:
The world is to be put aside!
Soon as God made it he sighed
Just to see how hard he tried
To make it beautiful and wide
And man not one half satisfied
To face it, man-fashion free,
For all he may do to be,
All himself whole-soulfully,
So sneaks out of it, as if he knew
One nobler finer thing to do
Than face the force God meant him to!

X

He for monk, she for nun,
And your master-stroke is done!
Snug in one of your safety-stalls,
Behind protection, such as their walls
Make manifest, there she prayed,
All as if what she mumbled made
For power, and not the thing to be done,
A world to be faced, one fight to be won.
Coward you made of her that day
She ran from the world away
To fear God and smirk and pray
For Heaven to open and dip her way.

XI

Their two lives were God-started!
God knows they were priest-parted,
Snuffed under and broken-hearted!
You and your partner-priest
Make most and love least
By such rulery—but hold,
There 's a spot of blood in that spot of gold
Will take you whole eons to rub out—
Spare me your quibble and muzzle that pout!

XII

Love of truth, love of man,
Love to do your most you can
For no favor, no fear,
You to step high-minded free
As the cherry-finch in his tree,
So the way of life is clear,
So the way of death is dear.

ALWAYS ROSALIE

WHAT should I think if you should say
 There stood now in my garden-space
My Rosalie her perfect way
 She used to, her same true face
Looking to me, as once she did
 Before the shadow dropped between
To part us, like a sorrow-screen,
 And I was looking where she was hid?

Flower-leaves die, so you say there is nothing
Worth while but just this body-betrothing.

If she were there in my garden now
 Under her apple-blossom bough,
Gave me one such gentle look
 As once she used to, eternal sky
Printed wondrously in her eye
 As it is mirrored in a brook,
Would I be glad she was come again
 Back to this world for its touch of pain?

Hark, where my hyacinth is dying,
How winds in the broken leaves are sighing!

Or if she should speak to me that one word
 Never before or since was heard
By me in any path I went,
 And I know all it held and meant!—

Always Rosalie

Think you I never hear it again
Without her lips to tell me plain,
And there the sweet word trebles its part
Ringing new majesty in my heart?

Hark, where my hyacinth is springing,
How winds in the leaves for lips are singing!

Or if she should come to me to place
Her warm cheek once more to my face
In the old way, I to not know
But that it always had been so,
Think you this heart of mine could stir,
My white cheek take to turning red
More than they do now she is dead,
Once I begin to think of her?

Hark in the leaves how the air is clinging—
Her sky-voice, neither sighing nor singing!

This was her field-flower once she dropped,
And now I have it, while what is more,
'Twas so much like her before it stopped,
Little fingers of madrepore,
Crescent eyes in the morning's cheek,
Lips too, yet would you say
Just because they have paled away
They lack language or power to speak?

Count life as you will, either much or nothing,
There goes one higher kind of betrothing!

Always I have her, nor you may know
By leaf or life-line how it is so!
What I am I may not touch nor see,
How then shall death snatch myself from me?

Life is to live, Power is to gain,
Always is more to think of to be,
So is this truth to the purpose plain:
Always and always my Rosalie!

AT SEA

ONCE was a ship
Where waves ran high
As her topmast-tip
Speared an ugly sky
Of clouds, like black wings in a swarm,
A ship snapped up in the whip of the storm.

One bellowing bark
Out of the dark,
One lunge of the seas
Such as rips and rees,
One back-handed blow at the underhull
And her broadside gaped like a broken skull.

To the pumps to a man
How they ducked and ran
As brothers, one thought
For one hero-lot,
As if, howsoever they pulled and bored,
They could dump the deep seas overboard!

Sooner than what
Was done or thought
She was down to her deck,
Was up to her neck
And under, to grope in such pit of death
As swallowed her down like a smothered breath.

Next day morning,
Just at dawning,
Six men at a raft
Kept a look, fore and aft,
For any one thing to be seen to be—
There was only the vast abandoned sea.

How many days
I shall not say
They were castaways
Where sunbeams play
To no purpose of grape or daffodil,
But only at loose ends to stab and kill.

Hunger made fast
At the throat of each,
Scarce a breath came to last
Or hope to reach,
As 'spite of all purpose and do their best
They were blown as thistledown east and west.

Could it be blunder,
Or what say you
Was the thing to do
Now the seas rolled under
To pitch their perch above hope, high and dry,
For never a chance in sight but to die,

When now came the plan
Of a life to give,
The life of one man
That the rest should live!
For who shall say, if soul reaches high,
'T were nobler to live for men than to die?

For quicker than shots,
At one certain sign,
They were casting lots
Like Princes divine
To see who should die, never but nor if,
So his brothers might have the chance to live,

When their captain stood,
Eyes out to the west,
In one mighty mood
To do his best—
Only a word: "Far rather would I
Go first than any of you should die"—

Nor sooner said
Than the thing was done,
Their captain there dead
In the laurel sun
By his own hand, and much as to say,
"I did my best for you, boys, my way!"

However much
Of hunger was there,
They could not touch
To bruise him a hair—
One look of love, one heart up to God,
And they lowered him in the sea-blue sod.

What matters their name,
Or the place they lie?
Beauty's the same
In earth or sky!
Of great men in the world there are many,
But greater than these men were, never any.

THE STORY OF ZEMEPHETH TALLITH

ZEMEPHETH TALLITH is one man

Who built wisdom out of what he saw,
So, built this tale—nothing truer than
The pith of it to prove one law
The sky-worlds plunge and glisten for:

By his evil way he thought to win!

Let us look to see what a way it was
He took to trick and wallow in!

Anything to gain his cause,
While so he thought, by tricks of chance,
To dagger one honest circumstance,
As if evil were not doomed in advance!

Fair was the girl, as he knew,

Honest and loveliest too;

One other point he saw,

I was her man she was looking for,

Not he—all would agree,

From what they guessed of her or could see,
She gave her whole woman-heart to me.

My rival now was one of those

To think soul is made out of sod,

To measure man by what he knows,

To think he could somehow outwit God

By trick-slick or dark doing

To get the most as this world goes

And never reap the ruing,

The Story of Zemepheth Tallith

Nor saw how Evil is doomed at first,
How the thing which lasts is Beautiful Right,
Evil sure to be kicked and curst
In spite of his magic might—
He could think, so knew a way
To gain his point by deviltry-play,
Keep the best of him at bay.

The girl he knew kept a heart for me,
Was mine by force of my love of her,
Yet he must try his thinking to see
If he could contrive to stir
Her longing to look his way a bit—
What mattered the wrong or right of it?
All is fair in love and war
So he bag the plunder he pillaged for!

First he must let his own heart go
—Love to catch love, he knew the bait—
Then forth at it to tell her so,
No occasion to smug or wait,
Danger lies in being late—
So up to her straight and out with his heart
By his lip of sireny song-bird art.

Next he must throw me down—she should see
I was small matter as her world went—
I might wear bells, be rhythm-bent,
Yet what could it count? Man must be
Front-militant if he would win,
While to lose the game he is playing in
Is lop-witted and sample sin.

Not enough he could say to her
Of his greatness, of my dwindlement,

To put himself first, as if it were
 More than half the thing he meant
 To push me aside, let me know
 He was the mightier, and so
 I could not get her, whether or no.

To her he was flower of speech:
 Her hand was like the satin cheek
 Of a leaf of queen-lily to beseech
 A man to open his heart and speak,
 While he now would have her all his own,
 To be his love for eternal life,
 So begged her to be his noble wife.

She watched him through as I watch my snipe
 On his quicksands duck and pipe,
 Nor knew what under stars he meant
 By his tatterwallops as on he went
 To tell her of his love,
 To tell her I was not fire enough,
 Only a topaz in the rough,

And—there as soon as he said it all,
 Told the great of him and the small,
 “Why” she answered, “could you not see
 Your rival is all the world to me?
 Was there no way you should know
 My heart for how I loved him so?—
 I married him just a year ago!”

ONE GREAT MAN

IN the world are many great men,
Greatness is every now and then;
I see it in each coke-hole pit,
'Though I be never looking for it—
In yonder roundhouse or where I may
Go loafing haphazard any day
I see it, and always for what
Is wonderful, and I dreamed of not.

So too is it a thing not of thought
To be by diagram any way taught,
Is not to be swallowed like a pellet;
Genius may lack it and yet tell it
By climax of page upon page,
Yet is it not a gift of age
Nor unique property of youth,
But only one Beauty of boundless truth.

Here is a case in hand:
You see the people piling by
In Broadway, as if the rounded land,
Whether for joy or pity,
Tumbled all mankind into the city,
As if there were no other place to die
Or live, as the case may be,
And men like flies in a pot of tea.

Among them pushed one tiny fellow,
 Ten years old only to a day,
 Eager eyes, cheeks white and yellow,
 In and out he wound his way
 Dogwise among them, tried to say
 What he craved, more people to buy
 His evening papers, yet never a sigh
 As the deaf and dumb crowd passed him by.

Two small hands, now he put them up,
 White-about-thin as a lily's cup;
 Two blue wide eyes, like an open book,
 Gave you one kindest manful look
 'Though he saw night come dropping down
 Its veil between him and the town
 To put his whole outlook dim—
 Was there no place in the world for him?

Slightest hands, such tiny feet,
 So you reason death is all,
 A blow of final defeat
 For one so wholly fragile and small!
 But hark, here 's another kind of thing,
 Voice with soul in it, such a ring
 Above hands and feet and all
 As speaks of nothing fragile or small!

Little legs as the arms are small,
 Body thin as a strawberry stem,
 Yet soul as large as sky-grace, all
 The stars may show by the host of **them**,
 And more—for mark you right there
 Is Beauty supersensuous fair
 Above any star-sparkle glow,
 Beyond where the wheels of planets go!

One Great Man

Soul, and you see the size of it,
 Never the hands and eyes of it;
Body, so passing small,
 Feeble as flies in a hungry squall;
Soul, as all space is great,
 Body out of keeping and date;
So comes this clean conviction to you:
 They are not one and the same, these two,

For look to my small Broadway chap:
 The face, how pale it is by the light
Of a shop lamp, under his cap
 And he looks in—how the shop is bright—
Pudding-day, while there he looks
 Now the steam whistles, treacle cooks
For corn-dodgers, celery-stem—
 What would he give for a bite of them!

Cold—which he minded not of;
 Shelter—he thought of no other
In all his palace of love
 But for the one pink infant brother
And helpless little patient mother—
 So the winds might whistle above,
Bite his cheek like a moccasin bites—
 Such hearts are proof against ugly nights.

Did he get a dollar for a day,
 All of it must go for them,
For her and her tiny flower-stem,
 “All for them,” so he would say,
So starved his throat, yet fed such heart
 As men make light of, such Godful part
As puts up fingers and eyes
 Beyond the whole sweep of crimson skies.

One day came his defeat,
 His seventh day, so 't was said,
 Of never morsel to eat,
 For there must be breath and bread
 For child and mother in bed,
 So large was his soul and sweet,
 So superhumanly wrought
 As never to think of himself a thought.

The hour was at one with dusk,
 Like his day he was come to a stop—
 One tilt of the head, one little husk
 As there at the curb they saw him drop
 Face to the lamp in his pudding-shop!
 Just a last word, like one living gem
 In a dying diadem:
 "All 's right—all for them."

In the world are many great men,
 Greatness which comes and goes,
 Nor footprint puts in the crossing snows—
 Copy it, you shoals of men
 Who shovel for what is small,
 Think your belly the Lord and all!—
 Here was a great man as nature goes
 And the good God knows!

HEREAFTER

I

SEE my man in his cuticle-coat,
His high thought just to grow to bloat
His rib up to stuff the coat!
He lived in his pretty suburb-spot,
Cascades moulded one silver river
Which made the great sun dance and quiver,
Trees were wild in his garden-plot;
Never was such another villa
For blossoms of poke and prune,
Flowers in branches of vanilla
To turn a whole year into June,
Cockrobins to put whistle
To purple snapdragon or thistle,
Tripods of trillium and grape
To give the sunbeams color-shape—
Under grass-bank or over lawn
Flew his eagles, flew spotted fawn,
Flew his fountains in air—
'Round him was all garden-care
To kindle eyes, stuff his pelt,
Make his last wish topple to melt.

II

My gentleman took this world in tow,
Knew a light way to capture coin
By small labor of brain or loin,
Knew what most men try to know,

One velvety way a man may go
 To get what most this one world offers,
Capital tricks for filling coffers
 To ripen the eye, sweeten the tongue
To fat his cheek just to keep him young—
 As if a world to be got made the thing,
Not such mammoth efforting
 As puts a man to be tried, to be more
For mightful as the eagles soar!
 Never he lacked in the world his way,
Never he lost a point to make
 Moly out of garden-clay
To rub out wrinkles, stop an ache,
 So that way were gathered to him
Ankledom, belly-vim,
 Majesty of rump and limb,
He high master to make most
 Of what other men played for and lost
By changing gold into gems and jelly
 To blush his eye, proud his belly.
How he prospered one could see
 By such his equanimity
As calms the look of gluttoned sheep
 Once they knuckle under to sleep.

III

One daughter, nineteen barely,
 Was sole companion to him; his stay,
His comforter she was each day,
 So much so 't was never or rarely
We saw them separate—like one they were grown
 Daughter and father there alone
In his topaz-palace, she to make
 Each day May-day for his sake,

He to have her, his vine now grown,
His clinging blossom and all his own.
They two just. Evening would come
Like a new life out of the sky,
One deluge of worlds chrysanthemum
Or tulip-colored to show him why
Beauty is put to such endless change:
To take new shape, loftier range.
Evening would come, there they would sit
Under the moon to wonder at it,
At all Heaven, what it all meant,
Such Beauty beyond wonderment
As looked to them by a single star
So perfect and so passing far
As by no cunning may be caught
At the threshold of any thought—
There she would mind him of many things
He seemed to do no thinking of,
As how the very stars grew wings,
Lived their light out and were off
To new purpose, mightier meaning
Clean beyond any human gleanings—
As how men too are made for moulding
Spirit out of body, just as you
See a star through the eons folding
White light in its breast, till fruitful new
Rose-light be born or tea-weed blue
To take the star-shape, star-wink too,
Just to hand such Beauty to you.

IV

"Dear father," she would say, "you make too much
Of pod-life, of plumful earth!"

Only what you may taste or touch
 You hold good enough, labor worth.
Yonder frolics your spotted fawn,
 See how he ambles and dances,
Or your aquamarine-tree prances
 As you get glugged looking on
At what you may touch to see,
 Think it highest sublimity
Of what may be reached to be got—
 Never you look to the thing which is not
To be seen nor tasted nor smelt,
 Has nor diaphragm nor pelt,
Not a knuckle to be felt,
 Yet is of us and around us
To enrapture and confound us,
 One out-of-sight Beauty, ever expanding,
Ever beyond all understanding.

V

“Father dear, there is more
Than copper joint, bismuth ore,
 More than your almond trees
Putting lips up to suckle breeze,
 More than the mortal best of these,
More in me, more of you
 Than pink blood or ambigu
May compass, may try to do.
 To find it you shall look around,
Look beyond your hunting-ground—
 Soul is not measured by the pound!”

VI

One day he looked for her—the pretty lip
 Of coral, her morning-cheek

Which dimpled as if trying to speak,
Her hand so like her lilac-strip—
Listened for her, the melody-pitch
Her voice took, her singing words
Playing among the bugle-birds
Till he scarce noticed which was which—
Called for her across his lawn
She danced between the robins on—
Begged for her: Oh come again,
Just as you were once bright and round
As any blossom could be found
Or moon at its meridian—
Oh come again, your flowers are waiting
To have you back,
Honey-flies in the sun are skating
Each purple track,
Your quince and olive tree stand reaching
Such palms to you
As if the soul of them were beseeching
The charms of you—
Oh come again as once you were quaffing
May-breath of aloe
To put your young eyes dancing, laughing
Like leaps of a swallow—
Yet was she nowhere there for him,
Called he never so kindly—
Looked he never so blindly
To know her only by cheek and limb,
As if the best of her, after all,
Were the amber neck, satin spall,
Her lips to which he could fly or call!
Nevermore! Only now she lay
At her couch her faded-flower-way,
Little left of her more to tell

What she was once—there she lay
 Like a wounded swan at bay,
 So white, only a lip of chalk,
 Scarce a breath of her to talk,
 One withered lily on a stalk!

VII

“Dear father,” she said, “look you to see
 How little now is left of me
 Your way of looking for bloom or such,
 A throat to listen to, to touch!—
 There ’s my poor last of an arm
 Now has lost its pretty charm
 Down to each shadow of each palm;
 Body goes slowly leaving me,
 Yet is there as much of me
 As ever to feel and to be
 My soul to keep my love of thee,
 To show this body may come to go,
 Yet plants the soul for you to know
 All as it ever was—see, I am not
 More than map or body-plot
 Of what I was once, there you and I
 Sought to unravel the evening sky
 To know what a wink of it meant,
 Such order and no blunderment,
 Such Beauty and all wonderment—
 Or such a morning as that one was
 We tugged at a stream to see the sun
 Angle for trout by his silver thread
 Of a thousand yellow-baited claws,
 Bobs of blue-light to shoot and run

Into violet or poppy-red
 As there we saw the pickerel flew
 To dash such sprays against the sun
 As broke into every kind of blue
 And scarlet and the thing was done:
 For so he took the pure white light
 Sky dropped, gave it one twitch and mix,
 Then sent it, for all his might,
 Into sparks of color and flight—
 There 's this life at its best of tricks!

"Look no more for me
 By your yonder lawn,
 Nor by my blossom-tree
 When I am gone—
 Look not about your place
 Of cinnamon-bowers
 To think to see my face
 Among the flowers—
 More is to think and see
 Than you live upon,
 More to be grown to be
 Beyond your lawn
 Of fountain and fawn—
 God gave me soul,
 My part of the whole,
 I to give it shape,
 Elbow and nape,
 Mould it to form
 Out of sun and storm
 By my way of Right,
 By my heel of Might,
 I to shape it so
 I come to see

More is to hope and be
Than men may know!
Look not for me
You touch and see
When I am gone—
No more my pace
Over yonder lawn,
My morning face
To look upon—
My little race
After joy and place
Is past and gone—
Look you for me
You may not see;
Have not a care
Lest I be not there
In the sunbeam-air.
My place I have known
To which I have grown
Which is everywhere
To be all I may
By my different day,
By my higher way—
Look for me not
By our pondhole spot
Where my supplejack climbs
Out of spring-bells and thymes —
Are there not moon and sun
To build upon?
Is there no way to see
What men may be?
Watch how sunshine light
Shows only white
Ere once it leaps to throw,

Hereafter

Through cloud or snow,
Pink to olive-amber glow
To hold you so—
See where skyland light
Makes only white
Till now it plunges through
My gem of fire or dew,
Gives me rocket-blossom blue;
Pierces yonder star
Like a shooting spar
To take such tint and shape
As put the world agape!
Ah, but there 's your rock
Sun may not puncture,
Gives only jolt and shock
Right at the juncture,
Casts its nothing-shadow
Across my meadow!
Soul would pierce you through,
Get a shape by you,
Other higher Beauty too
Than any pink, any blue,
Form to have and to hold,
And man the mould!
Soul is everywhere,
For you your share
To let it through
One life of you
To take nobler shape
Than shin and nape,
To capture more of you
Than pink or blue,
Capture power, cast,
Which shall surely last

After this mould is gone
Soul grows upon.

“Play nor gier-eagle
Nor yelping beagle,
Nor yet the solid rock
Which tries to block
Each little gentle ray
Picking its handsome way
Against the clay,
Looking for drops of dew
To let it through,
For bubbles of glass
To let it pass
Into submarine blue,
Into coral stripes—
So my sunbeam ripens!

“Seek me not, dear father,
By your muscadine-wall,
Nor where stein-vines gather
New plums in fall—
Look you for me rather
Where my lilies drop
At autumn, have lost their prop—
Only Beauty goes,
Beauty of fig and rose;
Stalk and filemot-leaf remain
To hug mud-bank, charnel-plain—
Only Beauty goes away,
Only that which is best,
Leaves pot-house of clay,
Punk and the rest—

Hereafter

Beauty goes, the rest stays,
Tumbles and decays.

“Look not for me
You hold and see,
But only for what
Makes royalty
Of heart and thought,
Makes soul to be
Beyond body-lot,
Transcendency
Triumphant-wrought!”

IN PRESTON

OH, the air is good to-day!
This is the June of it, my friend;
Heart-leap is the game to play,
Fig and mint are under way,
My prune-tree to the sweet leaf-end,
So let us be off an hour or two
For a breath to take and a thing to do!

Over yonder, one way which
We go to snuff the apple-breath,
There should run one meadow-ditch
Nursing a bosomful of fitch
Where the hawk is still and reasoneth
As I reason now I go to see
What change has come in my ditch and me

Since I was boy here—you know
How quick the years step in and out
And drag you with them—well, so
I was boy here such long ago,
Knew the wild tree-tribe 'round about,
Yet now could scarce find a way to tell
My swamp-apple-swamp or puff-ball bell.

Comes each thought like June winds do
To waft me back again to then
When each bottle-bird for you
Diamonded his wings in dew,

Blew the same song again and again,
As if he feared you might up and go
If he changed his tune, so kept on so.

Let us take the pasture-way!
How I used to drive our cattle
By just this path, just this day
Everything had a thing to say:
There was each evening-frog-pond prattle,
My game-cock to pipe on Lantern Hill
As if his throat were a broken quill.

This my uncle's acre-lot
I got flowers in, cylinder flax,
Bubbles of forget-me-not,
Each flower sweet and wild I got,
Treed the bobwhite in his tracks,
Trailed my bee to his purple thistle
To join him, help him pump and whistle.

Did it ever come to you
How much they are, those wonder-days
We left behind for a view
Of the world to try to do
Loyalier things by royalier ways,
And now to look back to think of them,
Beauty for king in a clover-stem

I dance about, wonder at,
Bow and bend to it just the way
I might to king or caveat,
While what I see you longing at
Is to be like one of these one day
That beckon so to you from the grass
By pink fingers, will not let you pass.

Just this corner of a wall
Is where I waited once for her
Who loved to come to my call—
Now the sun began to fall,
Now we were under this fir,
And just to think of it, such love then
As never comes in the world again!

See how the shadows will play
Forever so across my field!
Stop to think of it how they
Never had a word to say,
A flower to hand you, crop to yield,
Yet always this shadow stays with men:
Youth comes never in life again,

To show, and I hold it true,
Dark makes nothing, has no power
To hand an atom to you
As sun does by his flame and dew.
Look how yonder Euphorbia flower
Strikes white and green like swords of grass
To cut through the shadows as they pass

So you shall harbor no thought
Of any shadow any way,
A thing which is wholly not,
Never could have had a day,
For have you not taken thought
To look your yondermost where there fly
No shadows across the blue-born sky?

So I say I hold it true
Darkness in the heart is for what

Shows the bright white soul of you
For more yet you shall be and do
Than heart has hoped, than men have thought,
And, just as I trusted that day then,
I shall have my first-born love again.

See this here, my sorrow-plot,
Their quiet garden where they lie
In ribbons of forget-me-not
Who left me their love for what
Is foremost and is not to die—
See how my orange nigella grew
To prick the mist and shadow through!

Oh, friend, for a breath of June!
Come with me now the fields are wet,
Dew-balls waiting for their moon,
Wrens to put the air in tune,
Song to the clapping of castanet,
And we be off, just I and you,
For a breath of it, as we used to do!

ROSY WEIGELIA

LAST night only, just there at her gate,
Such beautiful night,
A whole moon out bright,
I was sure to be eager, stay late,
Linger so long as the moon would wait.

Under her catalpa tree
She was waiting as I came;
I knew she was waiting for me,
All as I know my either name;
I knew I was all her thought,
I knew I was what she said,
Wholly her trusting trusted Fred,
While a man in the world was not
For her in my place instead.

A king-robin in a plum-tree dropped
Into such a new tune
To the harking moon
As never I thought was heard or topped
Since man by a taste of sweet was stopped.

As now at her gate I stood,
The moon struck in through the leaves between,
Mottled her frock a new gold and green,
Pushed at her eyelids, tried to intrude
Where soul hides—I saw her look
The other way, as if she took
The moon for a robber-rook.

Life is plenty, once anyone knows
How to lay his plan
Like a gullet-man
To get the most—but stroke your nose
To take a thought, lest you trip your toes!

Most men scramble for what is most,
Few men think of their best,
Seldom or never to boast
Of the battlesome breast
Which brought them to time to be men,
Makes a man over again—
Power to your elbow and you
By your struggle to do!

All by her smile I could clearly see
She watched for me now
From her moonbeam-brow
Close to her small Weigelia-tree
Just to be thinking only of me.

Now I was there at her lap,
Now at her eyes with my sigh;
Life was a wing and its flap
And I heart-ready to die
For love of her, now I knew
She was for me so soulful-true
As taught me once for all to smother
Thought that she could think of another.

Prettily true her missel-bird sung
Of a soul he had
Which was dancing glad
As flowers in his dew-tree overhung
Like evening bells, till I thought they rung.

I was not looking to her so
 For soul supremity of thought—
Love has a way of its own to go,
 While what I think of it matters not
So I and the one I love be one,
 So I play my part and I have won,
So the prime high problem of life be done,
 To wit, that I and my love be one.

Hark to the lark in his trees above,
 His song-about-leap
 For a soul to keep
For just his way to gurgle and love—
One life, one song for him is enough!

In all the country 'round
 Was only the one Weigelia-bush
In her pretty Oregon-ground—
 Of this she gathered a single strip,
Put it in my coat-lap—so!—
 Red was the flower as her flower-lip,
By which she would have me know
 Love was tied in her bosom so
As never to fail me, never to go.

Next day evening, to tell above all,
 I was off the way
 Of a popinjay
To tune my step to the village ball,
Our May-Moth dance at the Town-House hall,

My care, above all, to be seen
 In pipe-stem hat, coat bottle-green,

Rosy Weigelia

My valiant map-of-war vest
 To dance in to strike liveliest—
Care to be noticed of her,
 Thought of my throat, of my jasper pin
To stick it at right angles in,
 Of each twitch down to each footfall stir
For my best strut, and all for her—
 One last touch of taste, so I
Could command her longest sigh,
 So, snug in my buttonhole lip
I tucked her rosy Weigelia-slip
 For only that she should see
Her one place in the heart of me,
 When—

Now for the courage men must grow
 For power to stand
 In perfect command
Of each little pallor-look or glow
If they see their idols snap and go—

For there at the ball I was one of seven—
 There might have been more, twice eleven,
But this I know, I counted seven
 Of those of us who hovered about
Her light laugh and dimple-pout
 As if our day were come and gone,
Nothing now worth our thinking on,
 Since each one told the one anecdote
Of how he thought she was wholly his
 As a sunbeam to a jacinth is,
As if the words would bite out his throat—
 Her strip of Weigelia was in each coat!

Better you to be merry never
 Than you clasp the bee
 For his mellidy
To hug the sting of him forever!
She stung us all—how great, how clever!

LIFE IN THE WORLD

How love the world so for what it is,
 Not for what it points,
Much as to love a precipice
 For the jag-oaks and ugly joints
And not for the pinnacle it points
 Where sky drops worlds, fire anoints?
You love not the precipice less,
 But more the yonder mightiness
Of sky-peak, giant suns,
 Where the Dog-Star winks, Chameleon runs!
Somewhat of you of finer touch
 Holds from loving the world too much,
A touch to show there is more
 Ahead always than went before.
Anyway you reason it
 There 's not so much to seize in it
As blindness builds and sees in it,
 Your world, just by itself alone
And no after, and no yonder-zone.
 See how the best of it is cut short:
My song-swallow revels in his sport,
 Music is his bosom-forte,
While right as he gave me his master-note
 Night whistled and the Dog-Star smote!

My rose has tucked up its elbow feather,
As if proof against any weather,
While, lo, before night is on,
Just a touch of amber sun
Gives it the withered lip
And sudden slip!
This my elegant star-thistle,
Plumes of reed green and gay yellow,
Carries a cock-robin for a whistle,
A bee-fly for a play-fellow,
Keeps a pocketful of venomy,
Draws swords to strike an enemy,
While just one gun-kick out of a sky
And my flower-friend is going to die!
My boy-mate and mighty friend,
He who took another track
Than I with my Love-of-Beauty knack,
Thought the life he had was an end
To fly to to ravish and circumtrend,
So made him his castle, built him for fair
His spires to lick the glistening air,
Nor saw the fingers how they pointed
Where worlds and Beauty are conjoined.
You love the world, you think you do,
For a thing worth flying for tying to,
Yet is it not the half of you
For value, for high-mightiness,
For see how it comes to less and less
By just the more of it you know,
By just the greatness which you grow,
You glad one day to let it go
For having gotten, by more and more,
Size to you and spirit-prone,
And the withered body is no more!

Life in the World

You love the world? Well and good!
We make no quarrel about that!
Who loves not the trebling chat,
A crossbill in his silky snood,
Yonder cloud of heliotrope
Bundled in an ochre cope,
My qua-bird, silent as a pope
To look so as if he knew
More than the knowing soul in you?
Who would not dawdle to dream
Hours away of one August day,
Flies for fellows, by any stream
Which tickles rocks so they display
Tall feathers of silver spray
To match daylight, defy each gleam
Flashing up from plunging bream
Where woodruff flowers, May-flies dip
To get each open lavender lip,
While you take the tulip for its pout,
Take the best of all about
To give the very best of you out?
Who does not love his flower
To see in it another power
Counts him more than the mortal hour
It lived and died in, hands up to each sky
As if never the flower got enough
Of wind-licks or the ugly cuff
Which mean more May-sweet and onyx dye?

Ah, but you love the world, you say,
For the God in it and monarch-play!
Think of that well once before you
Take it for wholesomest wholly true

And you may discover the God in you!
My sand-cricket will dance in the sun,
Yet a plover's beak is the thing in point,
His craw is empty, is out of joint,
So ere his pretty dance is begun
My pretty cricket is crippled and done.
My pigeon of the mulberry strip
From shoulder-joint out to each tip
Of wing, also water-green dye
Which matches his iris hood and eye,
His song only the one low sigh,
And there I must let him slip
To death in an anaconda's grip!
Ah—so you turn against the thing!
Yet you see it next just about,
Nature's grunt and junketing,
Strength putting weakness to rout,
A tiger's jaws in a eweling's throat
Just that he may suck blood and bloat!
You do not love the thing? Ah, so!
But nature made it that way once:
Is Nature, then, just dotard-dunce
Because I found my way to go
Above, beyond it, so much higher
As to drop off every blood-desire
For other nobler thing to think
Than potwise ways by trick and kink?
My garden will grow my tree,
While there in the top of it I shall see
One flower of such supremacy
Of white with blue lines inter-run
I wonder how the thing is done
Out of black earth and carrion
Till I look up to the monarch sun.

Life in the World

By what I do not like I show
Just that in me was meant to grow
Beyond Nature here as I see it,
First to surpass, last to flee it,
Quite as this flower has over-topped
The mud-pool-patch where sweet was cropped
Even to outspangle the imperial sun
By blue and white lines inter-run!

See how your noblest may not be best,
As this world goes: There for your life
Is the keen sweetheart and pretty wife,
Yet over and above her, east or west,
There, too, the clinging patient mother
You tie to more than any other
For love of her—yet is it best
You leave her to join another
By the whip-royal way of life,
Get you the new blue-ribbon wife,
While to leave her who never left you,
To put another in her place,
Drop her aside, as you will do,
Hurts hard enough in any case,
Is never your highest heart in you.
Or look how you live life in the main
For what 's to come out of it, a gain
Of some sort, a way to glue
More pie-cheek and jowl to you,
To reach for glory and power,
For the honey-suck of an hour,
While all the days the more you do
For not a little thought of you
But only to be kind and true

Brings finer glory into view,
Nobler soul to be flying to.

Nature will push out the weak,
Fling it aside as bubbishy,
Nothing worth or rubbishy—
Soul takes another voice to speak,
And, all in spite of this life-wise art,
Gathers her weaklings to her heart
To show, as I said before,
As I say again and again,
There goes more of me, skyfuls more
Than I may suck out of wind and rain,
Out of suns or worlds or laws
By any trick of brain and paws,
One part of me which mightily grows
To where Beauty ripens and no man knows,
Like as this mud-heap flies a rose.

Under a brow of sky
With a moon for an eye
My Rosalie died—
Never I heard her sigh,
Both pale eyes open wide
And she looked so straight above
As if she saw her way
In the clear other day
Of loftier love,
Of untangled play
Of sweet spirit to go
Beyond what men know
Of life and love and power
And the snap-shot hour.

How in our playmate-days
We were one together
Through scallopy bays
In our sun-born weather
Just to leap and laugh
Like free idle chaff
In the wind-warm days
Of June—and now gone,
Life over and days done,
She so willing to go,
Had done her best
To greaten to know,
By each hard-time test,
Soul was meant to grow
And to leave the rest
Of the world below.
She died, as I have said,
In her moonbeam-bed,
Such pale fingers reaching
For their aster gems,
Like water-lily stems
Parched and bleaching—
Looked as if she saw
In the blue high air
New worlds out there
Worth dying for.
She died as the great die,
Knew the what of it, the why
There 's no need to sigh
For what is best put by,
This world when life is through
For more to struggle to
The way all spirit knows
By how it grows,

Each day to come to more
Than ever before,
Each year to see what blue
Lapwing or forest grew,
See body get its growth,
Field-flower its blowth,
But never the soul
To look to an end,
To know any goal,
Any final friend,
Always the heavens too small
For this soul of all
To compass an end,
And so she looked that night—
There a certain light
Of another sight
Lay in her eyes,
Of a depth and height
More than lively-wise,
More than mortal bright—
There came one look to me
Of love I shall see
When my day is done
And my view begun
Beyond what men think
In a summer wink,
Beyond what they know
Of a summer glow,
Beyond where they run,
And I take my view
In the endless blue
Beyond any sun—
Just her one look to me
Of such knowing thought

Life in the World

So supremely wrought
Of Beauty, and I could see
Only her Majesty
Of soul which took to flight
Out of touch, out of sight,
But never out of heart,
Never out of me,
Always my other part,
Always my Rosalie,
As the rich moon is there,
Nevermore to touch,
Evermore to share
Her light, none like it such,
Her Beauty, none like it fair,
Evermore and everywhere.

Love you the world to take it
For only what it is,
For just what you may make it,
And the upshot of it this:
More is of you than you may do
Or think to feel or travel to
By one life, if you only knew?

Mark the sky-kaleidoscope
Of worlds and suns and power
Mixing blush and heliotrope
With prune-blue every hour
Of change! How they break up, blow new flame,
A new shuffle just the constant game,
Yet Beauty there forever the same!

Love you the world to keep it?
Not so, my friend—your way

Makes that you more than reap it,
 You take it for a day
To grow in, as you grew your flowers
 Between the sprinkle of stars and showers,
 To come to Beauty beyond all Powers.

EUNICE

How the grasses in each gentle sod
 Bend like fingers to point to me,
Then straighten to point to God,
 As if they try to have me see
I am one with eternity!

That way I think when the sun goes down,
 Seems to have gone so far away
There never might come another day
 To drop its light on grass and town,
While yet I know this earth only runs
 One moment between me and steeples of suns.

I wonder, Eunice, do you remember
 Such an afternoon as that
In the first quarter of September
 We treed the canticle of a chat
At the elbow of your orchard wall
 Ringing to us his loudest call,
Singing as if his soul were all!

I wonder, too, do you now think
 Of one August noon—our pond-hole ditch
We clung to, we watched at the brink
 The pickerel at his slip and twitch,
While 'round us was all summer air,
 All 'round us never cloud of care!

What I would have said, who knows?

Down in the grass the flowers were ripe;
I stooped and pulled the pinkest rose

That ever wore cheek or stripe;
You hung it in your hair to pitch

Where the cheek was ripe as the pink was rich—
Who could have ever told which was which?

Such another day came what

Comes never ever to be forgot,
Your hand to hand me this ivy flower,
Which I have kept so where it clings,
And I know all the thought it brings
In one small hand of such mighty power,
Just one withered tiny flower
To follow me the long years through,
One day to bring me back to you.

Or in one evening under cover

Of so many worlds for troops of light
I was one one-hearted lover,
Kept your true face close in sight
To envy the moon which was there
At your new cheek and gentle hair.

Did life go hard with me in places,

Have I tried many thoughts in turn,
Looked for the old hearts in new faces,
Found how the Furies chop and churn,
Through all of it the long way through
Always my soul went back to you.

So young we were parted!

That one day
Will never from my eyes away,

The day I saw you my last,
Looked back to you where you stood
By your anglerod-wood
In your ivy-leaf hood,

Waved to me up the road,
Gave me your smile, while yet
The smile held such heavy load
As I am never to forget,
Such hope-broken look of plea,
While scarcely I could look to see
For all the darkness was in me.

So were we cut asunder!
Who shall say it was blunder?
Life is wonder upon wonder
That so much seems to go wrong
And we come out of it tall and strong!
Each one to his cloud and clay
As each blossom fights a way
To poke up through the earth
All kinds of supremest worth.

So many years are done,
So many things are wrought,
But not since that Sunday sun
Were you ever once forgot,
Or farther away ever from me
Than soul is—there 's my truth I see.

Is it not true that we are one?
Yet the world has put us so wide apart
Since our young love first begun
So high above knowledge, gold and art,

I look about and I see

One truth everywhere put to me:

There stands no limit to this heart;

For 'though we were parted and you went

Your way, I my way too,

Played the high-minded game straight through,

Captured prize and bafflement,

And we were lost to each other so wide

Where all things have lasted while man has died,

Yet are lives lost so fields may be won,

And now that this life is said and done,

Are we not, much as ever, you and I, one?

IN A BELL-TOWER

BELL-TOWER times!

Each bell he smote

Rang out one bell-bosom note
In galaxies of chimes
Across country—men heard
Each ripple, like a silver word—
They thought: What is it that sings
As if each bell had a soul
Bent upon some super-goal,
A soul just of bell and wings?—
Not once you thought of you,
Only of the trombone-air
How it fingered and blew
Into song from everywhere—
Yet there came each lilt and dole
Told us of another soul
They came from somehow, somewhere,
To drop such sweetness in the air.
Over and above the whole
High heaven of song men caught
One super-sense, one soul
Which must have wholly wrought
Such keyboards in the wind that day
As tempted the wild storm to play
At lullaby or chant—
Sweet Heaven seemed to throb and pant.

I

Up among one stack of bells
In a tower, so my story goes,
The story now each villager tells
For what he heard, as best he knows,
Lived once—I vouch it was long ago—
A dwarf of hunch-back build—
Crooked he was, quog-shape so,
So much his back was hilled,
Cheek-bones sticking so far out
Like an overpowering pout,
As if the eyes were window-silled,
Toady-like to a touch,
Low limp, hop-up of a slutch
For slinking by half a crawl,
Such a miserly gait,
His lizard-look over him all
Like a sneer and grin of fate,
Yet one would wonder to see
His brow was rounded as broad
As the forehead of a God,
One heart-look of infinity
Out of such wondrous eyes
As marked him part of divinity,
Showed him overhuman wise,
As if they swallowed a light
Never came of human sight.
This was the bell-tower man,
Aspect scarce better than
Any mud-bank of a ditch—
So little between his trip and hitch
For anyone to choose,
I might think the devil was loose.

At least so I think he thought,
So measured himself, for soon
As he understood for what
Men took him, whatlike he seemed,
Aborted monster macaroon,
Hideous more than demons dreamed,
He took to his one high whim
That, take him for limb and limb,
This world was not meant for him.
Never was he made to strut
More than crab or mariput;
Could not copy elegance
In his frogsome circumstance;
Pretty maiden would not look
At his step he undertook
To shuffle by hook or crook;
One by one, only a sigh,
People would pass him by
With their post wiggle or shrug
To see him trundle and tug
To wind'ard like a tumble-bug—
Pity, perhaps, which was all,
Small as most pity-size is small.

II

So, since he could not be of it,
Bound was he to be above it,
This world with its mucilage-tricks
Where your fly-man licks and sticks—
Somewhat he could see made higher
Than this animal desire
To grow feathers, shape each limb
To prettiness, court one whim

For brain-work to compass power
To gain gain, get the whole
By any poverty of soul
In one small life of an hour.
How to be out of the world, yet
Be of it wholly enough
To give it his best, his love,
There was his question-quodlibet!
Knew he well he could not be
As others were, could not do
As others did, could not see
As others saw—his was only
Life all masterful and lonely
To do and to be his most,
Die soul-sovereign at his post.
Well he saw, well he knew
He was more than others grew
By many lives—deep and true
His heart was, so his soul
Seemed to circumreach the whole
Of what was noblest and best,
Something inconceivably blest.
Look you your list of men,
You will not see such soul again.
Much he had in him to do
His way, not your way nor mine,
A soul to show which was true,
A heart which was half divine,
Till his thought like this thought grew:
To live and to not be seen,
To find him a way to hide
Back of some perfect screen,
Show just his spirit-side,
Men to forget what he had been

In a Bell-Tower

In body-shape and claw,
See only soul worth living for.

III

How to rise above it,
This grouse-house life of men,
How to not be of it,
Yet of it heart and ken
To sound his highest word,
To let his soul be heard
For all the best was of it,
All men to come to love him
For more than skin and limb,
For just the soul he was,
Nor see his body-flaws?

“Oh for a life in yonder cloud
Where the stars are dumb whose heart is loud
In purple voice out of orange lips
Just as the darkness dips,
That I might be as they are there
For high above the world and for fair
As moon-tracks where my spirit walks,
Where eternal silence talks,
One cloud-life for one evening sail,
To come and go and to never fail
Of the orange-spot, purple stripe
Ripening ever, never ripe,
To gather sky and suns and moons
Of climax, cycles of boons,
Of orange-light so I let it fall
Over the world and all!
Oh for my cloud to float upon
After this conquered world is gone!

My light, my spirit to come again
My cloud is—'t will come and go
In purple or orange glow
Across' my sky forever so
Beyond your human ken—
Only its shadow walks with men."

A church-bell tower in his village stood
One furlong away,
A tower he eyed with such hungry mood,
While people would say:
"What means the cripple: Look to him now
At his plunge and hitch,
Shrugging to make his shuffle or bow,
One never knows which,
Always an eye to the bell-tower pinned
As if he would rise,
Like one who one day dropped and sinned,
To capture the skies!"
Till one would ask, "Why so is your mind
In the bell-tower there?
What purpose now has your heart divined,
Or what steeple-care?"—
When this way he answered: "I would be,
So far as I may,
Far off from your poor proclivity
Of life by the day
To ape what only wallows and squirms
By the body-trick,
To play your game of crows and worms
To tickle and pick!
Look what cluster of singing bells
In your yonder tower,
Tongues like whirlwinds of lofty spells

In a Bell-Tower

To scatter their shower
Of song in yonder grasses among
To rapture people,
As if a soul were in every tongue
Of the tuning steeple!
High in your tower above I would live
To brother the bells—
They unloose their heart, neither 'but' nor 'if,'
There the lintie swells
His throat to join them in their ringing
Against every wrong,
Like all the world were up and flinging
Its soul into song.
Carry me now, oh carry me there
By noble hand,
Build me my nest in the bell-tower air
Above men and land,
That I may turn my soul into bells
To give them my touch
Shall wake a thought no one world tells,
No song like it such!
I 'll shape the shape of your bell-tower tone
Just under the sky,
My life I 'll live in the tower alone
To the end that I
May tell my heart to the world in bells
Just behind my screen,
May send my soul into mountain dells,
I never be seen,
May pin my soul to my silver word
And only be heard."

IV

So they took the cripple up,

Put him in their bell-tower cup,
Took him at his honest word
He should never more be seen,
He should only be heard
Back of his bell-tower screen,
Soul-foremost to strike the air
Into sparks and spasms of song,
Rouse his world up everywhere,
By rhapsody of his silver gong,
To Beauty, just Beauty of soul—
There 's high life at its highest goal!

v

Now in his tower he is sitting,
Evening is part of the sky,
Weary men too are sitting,
Beginning to sleep or to die,
Beginning to wonder what life is,
What the value of strife is,
To wonder if men are born
Just to be wrinkled and torn,
To wonder if soul climbs high
Only to topple and die,
When—now he was touching the keys,
Out of the tower-top shot
More than men ever caught,
Whirlwinds of harmonies,
Keen as the spark of a star,
Deep as all heaven-ward blue,
Tones of an infinite far
To show you the soul in you,
Sounds from so far away
Like waves on another shore,

In a Bell-Tower

Men were communing to say
Never was music before
The like of it to seize the heart,
Such was its sweet great masterpart,
Such its new bosom of power
To raise men to what is high,
They saw soul never could die,
They never doubted of life
Or the value of strife,
While as for their trust and longing
They found in his gorgeous gonging,
Never before was such wonder-songing!

VI

In chapel below men were kneeling
For fear of a God;
Women were ducking, appealing
By qualmody, quobbing nod
For mercy, for assistance,
For the glory of non-resistance,
—How the world is ruled by a rod!—
Their noses pinned in a book,
One way only they could look,
One thing only they could see,
What power is in Divinity,
What powerlessness is in men
To do or to think to be
The whole of human supremacy
As men have been again and again!
Now in a chapel for a jacket
To shut Divinity out,
To bow down to it, yet to lack it,
Each man over-full of doubt

Of his own lordliness of power
To whip a universe out,
Each one doing his most to cower,
Each one doing his best to squirm,
Glorify God by playing worm,
When—sudden the bells were singing
Such song a man never heard,
All the wild winds were ringing,
Sky over sky was stirred,
Leaf leaped to leaf in the hornet-briar,
I saw the throstle duck his ear,
Men were up, all hearts were higher,
Men were up, their fight was clear
Against any thought of God for fear—
Men were up, each mellow blow
Of the bells compelled them so—
Of the bells—they jumped and jolted
Each other all as tongues unbolted,
But how they jumbled and sang,
Oh how they tumbled and rang
Their souls through the souls of men
To be up, to be Gods again—
Man to his feet to stand straight
As a God to be great—
Man to his heart to be true
And to hold to it too—
Man to his finger to point
And to go, jaw and joint—
Man to his throat to declare
What is uppermost fair—
Man to his best to be worth
More than pebblesome earth—
Man to his virtue to veer
Beyond shadow of fear—

Man to his spirit to rise
Over grass-path or skies!

So rang the bells as there sat the cripple
Like a God in his throne,
To let his whole soul boom and ripple
Each wonderment-tone
Down to the people in church underneath
Who stopped where they were,
Stopped short of the wink of a breath to breathe
A prayer or to stir,
So were they captured, so raptured so
By his song-bird spells
Flinging their tongue-magic to and fro
Like a forest of bells,
They forgot to pray, forgot their seasons
For ducking, for quobbing,
They took no note of those ritual reasons
Men have for throbbing,
But up in arms for love of Beauty
As now they heard it,
For love of him whose love of duty
Had touched and stirred it,
There they were brought to their feet for straight
As Gods are to rise,
There they were brought to themselves to be great
Beyond men who are wise,
There they were held to a note which was high
As the upheaving sky
To beckon man up above earth to be
What is Godfullest free,
To show men a way above earth to do
What is giantest true

For fear of nothing, for love of the test
Puts men to their best
Like my cripple now in his bell-tower there
With his Beauty of soul, his body of care!

VII

Church out, the people gone,
There was one remained,
One village-girl, whom to look upon
Man would think his Heaven was gained,
Such sweet soul of such countless grace
Nested in her open face
As a man would not chance to see
Once in a world of maidenry,
Her new throat each word in it
Like the revel of a linnet,
And you so riveted there
By each lilt of her and air
Signing of such heart underneath,
Men marvelled, forgot to breathe—
Fortune might come or go
And no matter, so they loved her so!

VIII

The bells by their new masterstroke
Took up ringing in her heart,
As if their chimody meant to choke
Soul back—she could take no part
In pew-dance, in ducking to God;
People halted to mark it odd,
Such change in her, she so changed
As clouds are gilded and rearranged
When the sun is low and the winds have changed—

What was to think of her now she grew
To listen only for her bells
Whichever way each sweet wind blew
To bring her their masterly spells,
As all the most kind watchful people
Remarked: her heart is in the steeple?

IX

Came she now to know each bell
Harbored more than tongue could spell,
Knew too this, how each fine ripple
Spoke the finger of a cripple—
“So much the more is he great,”
Thought she to herself; “shall I estimate
My man by his fingers and toes,
His shoulder-shape, his way he goes,
His knuckledom or bobadil-whim,
Not by what he is, what he knows,
Not by the heart and soul in him?
To the tower!—there ’s no other way
—He will not descend to earth again—
To the tower where his fingers play
What the soul of a world would say,
‘Never God made a thing for vain’—
To the tower in yonder air,
To the mighty soul which is castled there!”

X

Evening comes around,
Sky is on the ground,
Stars of dew in meadow-grass are swinging,
Bobolink and cricket take turns at singing

For the tulip in the air,
Mock-orange, purple pear,
For such Beauty everywhere.

How each bosom drums
When the sentence comes
To love, has its way of tuning into chiming,
As if the heart were steadied and were climbing
For some blossom in the air
More than this world is fair,
More than this life is anywhere!

How a maiden's heart
Leaps to stop and start
At just a thought that there may be another,
One dearer one than any friend or brother,
Half the soul of her to be
And best of her is he,
More than all the world in fee!

What a care she keeps,
Never speaks nor peeps
To let you know a thought she has in keeping
As softly to his heart her heart is creeping,
Like a June wind turns to sighs
Till lily-blossoms rise
Reaching after perfect skies!

Here and now by spells
Just his gentle bells
Go tossing in her thought to do their ringing,
Go hiding in her heart to do their singing
Like a bellody of rhyme
Bursting there to throb and chime—
How they summoned her to climb

In a Bell-Tower

To the trumpet-tower,
To the man of power
Who rose above a world to do his souling
By melody of master-tongues for tolling
How the hearts of men reach high
As yonder roofs of sky
Till they come there by-and-bye!

To the tower to see
What a man could be
With not a body worth a wink of seeing,
Yet all a soul all Beauty for all being,
Like a galaxy of grace,
Gem-work and planet-space
Crouching in their hiding-place!

Just to see him there
In his field of air!—
Yet is a maiden timid about going,
Lest people think her forward or too knowing—
Tiny foolish world to think
Hope is just a passing kink,
Love is governed by a wink!

For quickly she is there
In the moon-made air
Among his bells, next to him in his steeple,
Where he looks down on what is small in people,
On their pride of pelt and limb,
Wordy bird, palate-whim—
Could he ring them up to him?

Looking in his eyes,
Jewels made of skies,

Only soul she saw, triumphant being
 —And what is there but soul is worth the seeing?
 She stood looking in his eyes
 Behind his perfect skies
 Where the endless morrows rise.

All the body-fault
 Of his bump and halt
 Were nothing to her now she took to seeing
 Such Beauty in him of transcendant being
 To conquer the things amiss,
 Such a shadow-world as this,
 All the blue star-spaces his.

So he won her there
 To the upper air
 By what he was, such soul beyond her seeing,
 The sweet in him of supersensual being,
 By his threnody of love
 Beyond her and above—
 Soul is enough!

CONFIDENTIALLY

I LOVED her—I don't mind telling you—
 You know her eyes were open blue
And trustful to pleaful true
 Looking into the soul of you—
Her hand like the wing of a swallow
 To beckon, and oh how a man would follow!
Her heart, never a word to speak,
 Writing all thought out at the cheek—
One look and you knew she never knew
 Her gentle power over you—
 And so I loved her!

What for one morning it was
 For song and shower of sun
In hedge-box—my prickly haws
 New needle-work had begun—
My piemag made pretty sprunts
 To step on a dozen flowers at once—
Against the red-end rocks
 Perched my Lipari-grape in flocks—
Such a morning—and she
 There like a lotos-blossom bee
To wing and sing for me,

 While scarcely once she took
A thought my way or little look,
 Flitting where the oxeye cowers,

Gifted as the gifted hours,
 My flower among the flowers!
So now to tell her—no such time
 Might come again of such lintie-chime
In bay-leaf and mistletoe
 To whisper to tell her so
How I loved her—oh, what spell
 Fastens a man that he may not tell!

Gone was my courage, so
 I breathed easier to let it go—
Small matter, as they say,
 I could tell her another day,
When, plump at the garden-gate,
 Defiant and game-cock straight
For mastership stood my rival mate—
 Next, as if she were already bride,
There he was at her other side,
 She between us—there we walked—
Well, you should have heard him how he talked

 His cheapery to flatter,
His wash-up and honey-spatter
 Till I thought—well, no matter—
Woman-like she could be
 Captured by his treaclery —
I must lose her, she was for fair
 His prisoner in his hunting-snare—
There flew his words like sugar-shot,
 I just lockjaw and spirit-not,
I mere poverty of power
 To article a word that hour!

Gewgaw—so I thought of him!
 How could she make more than nought of him

With his summer fly-beak buzzing,
His puff-up and collar-fussing?—
There was I now deep-down jealous!
What for a blow like that to fell us?
Yet was he masterly straight and proud,
Thought little and talked loud,
None of the droop in him or dowl—
So I said, she is his,
Such men never fire to miss.

Soon we came upon the lawn,
A sheet of sun to walk upon,
Then away to the gate,
And I began to say it was late
And time for me to go,
And—then was one look she gave to me
Men die for if only they can see,
Her true great eyes of such pleaful glow
As said to me, "Will you never know,
Will you never know how my soul is true
As yonder sky-beam is to you?"

ADELYN, OR, HOW TO WIN HER

I

LOVER

WHAT a pretty girl!
Such her olive face
Under lock and curl
As I want and chase
For the gloss of pearl,
For her nod of grace;
Only of her face I keep me thinking,
Her look like heaven when all the stars are blinking.

FRIEND

How to win her? Why, forget to try!
Stop your thinking about the prize
Hangs there in her velvet eyes!
Your last time you heard her sigh
She was not longing for you,
But for what you should come to to be and do.

LOVER

Mind each auburn tress
Whispers at her brow
Like a tongue to confess,
By one solemn vow,

She shall not be less
Than I see her now,
My flower in my yonder garden clinging
Among the moon-beds where her wrens are singing.

FRIEND

But how to win her? Will you think
To trap her like a meadowink
By your throat of rose, your breast of pink?
Put an ear to her to see
She is more than melody!
Put an eye to her to know
She is more than orchards blow!
Have a thought of her for what
Is rose-most in her soul of thought,
Has feeling for a friend,
Is mighty to comprehend
Life holds purpose beyond an end!

LOVER

Ah, but there she is,
All to see and touch,
Lips not meant to miss,
Brow, none like it such,
Eyes to close and kiss,
Neck and cheek to clutch,
My primrose for my having and folding
As April has all summer in his holding.

FRIEND

Ah, but how to win her?
April is but beginner,

Summer has another mind,
Has left her April behind;
More than April ever meant
Is summer in her firmament!
You look to see what pink may speak
Or slumber there at her cheek;
You look to capture such joys
As bells in her morning voice,
Suns in those horizon-eyes
Which draw you to look beyond
Where eternal spirit lies
Out of reach of knuckles and bond.
Have a look to see
The best of her, my friend,
What she is come to be
More than her ribbon-end,
Or boxberries you dazzle at
Plumping their toe-dance in her hat.

LOVER

What a wealth is hers
Of summerly throat,
Like a May wind purrs
For a thrush to quote,
Like a cloud-lark stirs
To his highest note
To join the wind in a summer ringing
As if all heaven were a harvest of singing.

FRIEND

But to win her! How to compass that?
More is for you to be edging at

Than beetle-burnish to gloss your hat,
Than an eye to your peaks of shoes,
As if, to be plain, instead
Of her taking you for heart and head,
You give her just feet to choose!
More is for you to grow
Than head-light, than tricks to know
Some gain-way to come and go,
More to be gotten to for power
Than flies climb by their flap of an hour!
Have all power in you to see
Man was meant to rise to be
Up above gadfly-kingdomy
To come to one monument-throne
God-fashion just to rule alone.
That way you shall win her—that way,
Never by your boot and hat-way.
Look not to see if she be looking,
Put not an eye to her to see
How your chance in her heart is cooking—
Only you look to do, to be
Mostwise and ghostwise—hold to your yearning
To get above life's liver-churning.—
Lives are many, death is soon,
Always will come another June,
So lash your world to some lasting moon!

LOVER

What an eye she has,
What a lip to kiss!
If I let her pass,
Then the question is
Who will get the lass
And the lip and kiss?

An eye is an eye, as meant for winking,
All in spite of your stilted thinking.

FRIEND

An eye is an eye, was meant to see;
Soul is soul, was meant to be!
She shall follow you, mark you that,
Straight to what you level at
So beauty be the thing in view,
All the dancing gems in you
To capture her by what you are,
Like as the glow-shine of a star
Captures me from never so far
By one strip of ivy-green,
By one dot of reddish-best,
While nothing is to be seen
Of the rib in it or saltpetre-breast.
How to win her is not to try,
Be your whole heart and the rest
As the zenith suns are high
To circum-compass their lordliest
And she shall follow, you shall find her—
What soul ever left her soul behind her?

II

Years and years are gone by—
See how they bubble to fly,
Yet print not a wrinkle in their sky!
She went her way, would not be had
For the tune in her or maple-plaid;
Would not be valued for what
I get in lapwing or cactus-pot;

Was more, by what she knew of herself,
Than pictures in the skirt of an elf—
Went her way, forgot his talk
About her dimples and pheasant-walk;
Forgot his moth-way he took
To have her for her touch and look
Like the lap-wings of a book,
Knowing, as she knew so well,
More was of her than asphodel
May mirror in its sepulchre-cell—
More, and he could not see it
For his blindness, albeit
Such spirit-life, by perfect trace,
Hung rare pictures in her face;
Such was his littleness of view
He saw only her pink and blue
New features, just her veil to hide
Soul from him and heart inside.
What for a man is a jobbernowl
To go cock-eyed, to limp and prowl,
Live on darkness like an owl!
He could see her girlhood-chin
Curve an S for him out and in,
Could idle to watch her nostrils breathe,
Knew her laughter meant pearls for teeth,
And so on—never stopped he to know
What lightened, darkened, leavened her so
Was soul, which was the whole of her,
The over-shining soul of her.

He too was gone his way;
Nought was to do or say
Beyond what he had said—
Makes each man his unique bed.

Being apart from her he could see
Only the one sublimity,
Just his one chance to be
Himself for all his mightiest,
Make his whole soul manifest
For what there lay in him to do
Above fly-flight, tweedling cockatoo—
Now not a look from her nor beck
Nor clinging lips to hold him in check!
On he went gaining greater
Power by having noble cause,
Lived his life for most he was—
The first of a man comes later,
Spirit seizes new wings, new props,
All as fast as body drops,
So is he ripened and high-souled
Just by crumbling and growing old.

So they parted—years went by,
Half a century at least;
They gathered wrinkles, their cheeks went by,
They were thinking of how to die
As body lessened while soul increased,
When—Now I come to that part
Has to do with soul and heart:
One day, like those fly-away days
Which sport so now the tune-bird plays
In box-plant at his roundelays,
One such day like that it chanced
To be curiously circumstanced
They should meet—I know the place,
All of a lemon-flower grace
In one open shut of winesap trees

Which set their net for birds and bees,
All as a rose will build its closet,
So pink and snug and perfect was it—
There they met in the same one spot
Once they christened Forget-Me-Not—
Neither looked to the other to see
Pink in the cheek, light in the eye;
Neither of power more than to be,
Each could whisper only the sigh,
The one word soul has, one last breath
Of yielding and welcome to death
Which was cheek to cheek with each of them,
The world most out of reach of them—
Passion-time in tree-green booth,
Each rush-lily look of youth
Were gone—only were there
In the brow of each, put everywhere,
Finger-mark of kindness and care,
One far-off look, as if they saw
One thing higher worth looking for
More than squab-life to bill and coo,
To count the feathers and ambigu;
More than plump white forearm to clutch,
As if soul focused in sight or touch!
Only the one look of them was there,
So much heart to it underneath
As captured scarce a lip to breathe,
One thought to utter—everywhere
Was silence, only the vireo
Tuned his throat to rapture so
I thought he was trying to say
What they could not—such wonderway
He took to perform his part,
Such overflow of wide wild heart:

Youth no more,
Only age,
Yet mark the score
How it crowds the page,
How the leaves are thin,
Finger-worn,
Spotted and torn
Where you begin
To think the song
Is fading too,
As all along
The avenue
Of notes the blight
Is through and through
To tax the sight
And lip of you,
Till one full day
You shall hear
Your same notes play
New and clear,
Climbingly strong
As they were then,
For here is your song,
In the wind again!

Now he saw her for what she was,
Not the sunrise-cheek to hide
Soul from him or heart inside;
Little body thin as a gauze
Time now covered white and blue
As all clear heaven looks to you—
Only her spirit glistened through,—
Such a look of love of him
As only soul may purpose to

Adelyn, or, How to Win Her

When sight falters, light is dim.
All for one perfecter view
Look where I hang this drop of dew
In the sun of a summer morn
To see how soon my gem is gone,
Yet never the warmth it died upon!
Stood he there, had grown so great
That not one look could hesitate
To show her he was come to be
More than she could touch or see,
More than thunder-light, planet-stir,
Yet all human and all for her.

So many years grew them both new,
The while they grew, as men say, old;
She saw him now to be fair, true,
As I see any blossom unfold
Its handsomest just at the last
After stalk and leaves are past.
They two now so one together
As not to think the boy-thought whether
Soul could perish or they could find
More beyond than is left behind,
More in all the eternal yet
Than teeth seize, gullets get,
Seeing they love so and are one
Only now when their life is done
And over—shall the best be lost,
Nothing come of all it cost,
When just to love and be great
Make each highest kind of state
I get out of this wheeling earth?—
Shall something become nothing worth
While what I know of or see

Everywhere 'round or over me
Make parcel of one eternity?
Two souls and now wholly one,
Soul grown greater than aught before,
Body wholly-most past and done,
Soul out-reaching for more and more,
Body no more than turning-spit,
Soul too large to be stuck to it—
Two souls now so wholly one
As not to question how or whether
More was to be than they had done,
Ready to face sweet death together—
Shall death cut short what God begun?

Soul knows—trust you that!
Knows a way of coming at
Always and always what is best
Of life and death and all the rest,
Oh, wonderful supra-mental guest!

MOON FIELDS, OR MAN THE GOD

Now comes a strip of light
 To split my gem in two:
If I get the angle right
 I get a strip of blue—
A different dip instead
 And I have a shape of red—
So is the soul in you
 To get a shape and hue
As it dartles through,
 Get form and power and size
Out of feet and pain and eyes.

PROLOGUE

My moon, not yours, nor any triune-
God-lorded or Paul-Petered moon
In wrinkles, nor plaster-of-Paris set
To mould people to a one-sphere limit—
Nor fly-trap moon where a thing to do
Was to closet spirits before they grew
To a wing-like God in the over-blue,
Clap a soul in to lop and trim it—
Nor weak-ankled moon, no mind to stalk
Above cockpits of chyme and chalk—
Nor weak-eyed moon which may not see
Further than moon-hypertrophy—
But my moon, put plump like an eye
For fair in the brow-place of the sky

To pick white light up, fling it bold
Through shadow, like a splash of gold—
My moon, where I lived to make
Most of moonlight, put soul at stake
In gorges of fire for teeth
To chew heart out, let man not breathe
Before he captured the right to
By fighting for higher life to fly to—
My master-moon to start with
I fought so, and lastly mastered
To death, the still face alabastered,
Which, needs I must, I 'm loth to part with,
My old new moon which ground me in two
For one purpose just, to see me through
To mastership and a conqueror's clutch
On new life, by deeper breath,
For chance to bellow and grin at death.
You earth-people hold to your thinking
This moon could never show one place
Worth men again, one fine great race
For picking light up, for drinking
Space in, worlds, soul, freedom
To mount above cockpits, sting-winkle shoals
Which mumble to some Holy See-dom,
An eyrie for broods of souls
To fly from, once they master wings
To fly best where the thistle stings.
One one-faced moon, my moon,
Of lips thinnest, of mightiest jaws,
Where I could hear the daw-cock croon
To sputter in an eagle's paws—
Men were matchless since life was wars;
No two-faced moon with an inkling
For prelate-winks, brow-wrinkling,

But just my clean free open moon
Caught listening to a lip of June.

I

My uncle's castle hung drooping out
On a chin of quartz, like a lazy lip
Curled under one wide mountain-rip
To scorn me—there was drowsy pout
About it, each window pane
Picked up each new sun-down stain
To fling it straight back at the sky
With the clean round snap of an eagle's eye.
So set was it in the upper rock
Of one shade and grain, block for block,
I could scarce tell, in clear noon air,
If there was any castle there
More than what looked like a graft
Of mother-trap—just mountain-shaft.
So was it sculptured in vast days back
Of all recording—my moon-made race
Was panther-hearted, took not one trace
Of soft side to it, not a spirit-smack
Of warm-bloodedness, lived to spill
Each other, lived to get their fill
Of life, which was all there was of it
Men thought worth a clam to covet.
Each feared the other, each built his cell
Like a bunch of ledge—one could not tell
Coping or trench of it or roof
From the hornblende which leaped aloof,
Much as a chipmunk will invest
In tanpits, since they hide him best.
My race was moon-mastered, began

Like most races, in a darkish way,
To pick power up, promulgate man,
By little first—first came display
Of porgy-jaw, of zoril-zip,
Of fang-whistle without the lip,
One straight pick-up-from-nothing plan
By which a race leaps from bad to better
Till man now came to be so much
The same as a lobster's paw, all clutch,
One kind of purely belly-getter.
My moon-people, like your earth-race,
Claimed their wonted quog-hog birthplace,
Made way up through steep of mud
To cooler head, warmer blood;
Sinew first, then brain for fightiness
To compass world-power, moon-mightiness,
Much as in your bondage-earth
The thing which once was least and worst
Made your beginning, came first,
Like darkness gives the star-beams birth.
Each one of my race fought his way
By vast endeavor, by little hope
To more than snuff his way or grope
To get his shin-bones laid away
To keep the peace forever. By gain,
Joy, mastery, pitfalls, pain,
Some held on, some would blunder,
While whether or no they kept their doubt
Or stuck to faith to fight it out,
All the bonded swarm went under.
See how all things so must die
Which float about the moonèd sky:
Men or moons, moonbeams as well,
Know two things which they could tell,

And both of them in a breath—
They live their life, they die their death.
What say then, once the stars unbend,
Are all things over, is there the end?
Are worlds meant to be undone,
Is nothing meant to come of it,
The whole vicegerent sum of it
Nothing, and so much begun?
My moon was peopled by my people,
Grass-plot was there, little pinches
Of powderdom, little inches
Of frost-bite, sun-smack—there the steeple
Which points into yonder super-hollow
Where all may look, none may follow;
Just your very shop was there,
Your village-pump for garden-care
Of pyrola, gentian—the town-clock square
With bells to whistle their chime
In the face of high-handed time.
Each thing took on shape for worth
Much the same as in your earth;
Generation upon generation
Grew one kind of adoration
For life, joy, nought beside,
Bowed heart and head down and died
When the last clutches at gain were spent—
Now only these hills for monument!

I caught one crystal—the clear stone knew
A way to pull a moonbeam through
To spill it into cherry or blue.

II

One thing you should understand
About moon matters and moon land:

The end was come, there was small picking
For man or beast, the air was thin,
Fields pinched up like a wrinkled skin,
The whole land pallorly to sicking,
As if the globe were choked by swallowing
So many races, so took to wallowing,
Vomited cinders till one would have said
They were the ashes of the dead.
If men died, so died their moon,
Quite as slowly, all as soon;
Thin air, hard heat, harder cold
Called halt; the race was gone
To where 't was harder to be born
Than die, if truth were told,
So it happened, by sickening time,
Men died out; just this one
Is left to swing about the sun
To tell his story of fire and rime.

III

One household just was saved,
My uncle's castle, which pouted out
At all the hell and havoc about,
At poppy flatfields now paved
By sulphur-cake, melted ledge,
From where it sticks out like a wedge
In a rift of high Petavius.
Our castle held just five of us:
My uncle's ward, new Natalie,
Pink cheeks tied to blue eyes
For glow-lights in morning skies
I rushed to, all as a boy
All in his throat and all joy,

Just as any bee will straight
To melon-bell to circulate
About the yellow, strike his pick
At the lip to get the honey-lick.
What a Natalie, too, she was
Those young days I knew her for what
Was heart-romp with scarce a thought,
Clear Beautiness for never cause
Soul could purpose—silver fingers
To twist her locks as May-sweet air
Plays in the playful grass—to snare
My heart—how thought of it lingers!
One would think, to see her by a stream
Which held her image underneath,
Think the surface tried to breathe
Yet could not, as if such dream
Of Beauty snatched away the air
Now the soul of Psyche wandered there.
My uncle's sister was next—our matron;
One could have taken her for patron,
So much she was master, on the plan
Women most fly to, to play the man.
Mostly her way of coming at you
Was not to win, but to outdo
You at any doing, thinking,
Pleased could she see a little shrinking.
'Spite of her mouth-lack, mink face,
Back-slope of her pea-size head
Scarce accountable for what she said,
Much was about her of human grace
And kindness—one way she had
Of finding in you good, not bad
To hold to over and above,
Fishing by cute sorts of bait

For a mouthful of your love
For which she would angle and bob and wait,
Brings her back to me, the best of her—
Now she is gone, what counts the rest of her?
Then there was cunning Clacky—
Prince was he not, nor lacky,
But one round all-natured man
My uncle fastened to years back,
Liked him mostly for this: his walk
Beat one level tick like a clock
He told time by, so named him Clack.
More than one could think he was bent up
To roundabout from head to heel,
Hooped in so as a Surrey-wheel
As if to keep his spirit pent up
Lest it should 'scape him; at his eyes
There was blaze, while just the while
Men saw him waddle, crab-end-wise,
There would come his humor-bubble,
A rough wind in a bunch of stubble,
Chuckle mostly mouth, no smile!
Under his jacket, albeit, you
Found good in him—he was clever too,
With one weakness, the unknown sex
He ciphered at, so wrote it X,
While where there was aught to decide
'Twixt man and woman in a chatter,
The man might have the best of the matter,
Yet there he stood, on the woman's side!
Stomach mounted high in his rating,
Clam-land, ways of vegetating—
You to your moonshine, sunny spots;
For him a dash at the honey-pots;
One roundabout man, as I have said,

Who booked books, was potpie read,
So wore all kinds of doubtful head.
He was of use, to my uncle at least,
If joy just to see the rascal feast.
My uncle is not so simple to tell you:
Lord head was he the country 'round,
Sky-scraping eye, hold on the ground,
So, if he spoke it would be well you
Marked time—no joy in shirking
The day you caught his top lip jerking.
Justice—there was his pretty theme
He pinned to—just to be just,
To do the right because he must,
Made his pro-profitable scheme.
This he held: there goes one law
Compels an oughtness—I might not do
Right because I wanted to
For love of it, for there he saw
Power in back of a universe
To bend to, else men capture curse;
I must low-bow me to Might
Before I come to know a bit,
Manage me to grow a wit,
Come to be master fully right.
Life, to his thinking, is all given
To capture earth, purchase Heaven;
So was it that to gain his end
He was just, would play the friend,
Play kind, too, play masterful good,
Nor throb in it, nor bosom-mood;
As when I notice how this moon
Scoops up sky like a silver spoon
Full of fire, as the thing would seem,
While I drink from it, beam by beam,

There comes to me this: the face is fair,
Yet no breast under it anywhere,
Only the cool clear head is there.
There was level peace-brow unctionary
Sweet about him to make one think
Soul could leap from a lip or wink
Of such epauleted functionary.
Meant he right for this: he thought
'T was coin, while Heaven was to be bought.
Yet right he was, mark you that!
Right was his game he levelled at
And no miss—so there was his claim
To mightiness in fact and fame.
Far as he went one could not say
He could be nobler so or stronger
In his snudgy leaf-beetle way—
Would he had lasted to me longer!

IV

He taught me the *value* of Right,
To be noble for an end in sight,
So reasoned he: this soul has value
To knock at gates, one thump of cash,
So he would ask not "Are you?" but "Shall you?"
"Shall you succeed in one life-long clash
To get your bosomful, fat and laughter,
Get the worth of your soul hereafter?"
He taught me the *value* of Right,
Never *love* of it—not once that!—
Life and power and worlds in sight
For me to try to be clutching at
For love of *them*, not for love of what
They could make me, soul and thought

To down or to put all gain aside
Ere they came part of my shank and hide.
Love of Right—not once that—
My one point I 'm hitting at:
Man may not step to spirit-plane
If he put first foot out for gain.
Mark, he made for right—so he was
Giant in his cubbard cause,
Since he could see no more than this:
Here was moon-wealth to be got,
Was one way to lose, another to not,
Nought was put in moons to miss,
Only what he bought was his,
So all things flourished price
From groundsel to golded skies:
Power over moon and men—his sight
And his wisdom this: Heaven comes of Right.
Far as he conjured he made good,
King-man he in moonful mood
Bent upon getting what he could
As compensation for right-doing—
How he kept the village brewing!
Heaven comes of Right—so much is right—
No dodging that dictum-height!
See now how he stuck to his text,
What came of it, what happened next!

v

Oh, what pretty morning one morning
A cloud lopped over the castle wall
To drop there like a yellow pall!
Or, shall I say, as an August awning
Pitched southerly and so spread

As to knock the sun off overhead?
Soon I was up one mountain path
Leading to where the bay-leaf leaps
To get his sun-rub of amber bath—
I took a way the ibex keeps
For constant climbing, high as he can,
Because he is afraid of man—
I caught his feeling, somehow I knew
'T was safer where the eagles glue
Their prongs to peaks to ride a blast out
Than I take my chances among men
Of being picked and plucked and cast out—
I angled for cistus, for citron-buds
Which tie the trees like links of studs—
And just so armed, while just so full
Of joy as boy once out of school
I came plunging through thorn, gorse,
To castle-wall where one tree was,
For there just between tree and wall,
Snug under her canopy overhead
Once purple, now half-ended red,
Where the ring-hawk safely flew
To rub his wing at a leaf of dew,
Was Natalie—she knew my coming
As a pear-flower knows the humming
Of a honey-fly—I rushed to her so
With my loud heart of Juney glow,
Just as you, once you were young,
Great soulfuls which could not be sung,
Lighted at her lip, then at her eyes
To swallow her smile, all as a shriek
Plunges at heaven all-over-like
To pick the cheek-red in his skies—
My Natalie, how I held her there

For such love of her, she so fair
As any pearl perched in her hair
I tangled, never to forget
Such glow-dance in such fire-new net—
Held her and held her, printed each cheek
With spirit to the temple-peak,
All the keen fine while was she
Passing her sweet soul back to me
Till I was sure I held in my hand
The wild flower of all Happy Land.
What is heart, oh! what is heart
That will sneer so, that will bite so,
Love so deep, then unite so,
To outgrow growth, break ranks and part?

VI

Off to my story and brief enough:
My uncle wanted her—scarcely for love,
Since he was so old he would rather,
For love of God, have been her father.
All in spite of this he wanted her;
I knew well he dogged and haunted her,
Would shin the mountain to bring her bay
Or buckeye, trundled a passion
To fringe her skirt, moss-pink fashion,
To tempt her to turn to look his way;
Hung twin brilliants at her ears
To spatter like a pair of tears—
While she—'t was not too hard to see
She wore her own head, so wanted me.
Childless was he, was without wife,
Wanted issue to prolong his life
After he was gone, a son to grace

His lawn-spot, wear his hat and face;
Who should blame him, who would not see
Himself sprout new, the old tree shoot
Finer branches to point one path
Higher than the mudded root
To where one keener sun is sunning,
To where the sunstone stars are running
For more than this poor planet hath?
Clacky knew well my uncle's way,
How he would do, what he would say
If he dared, so would tell to me
What he heard, all he could see
Of how my uncle was in a mood
To get the girl for himself if he could.
How I loved her Heaven knew;
Nought for me in the moon beside;
God might be great, man be true,
Nought was to think, less was to do
If I could not have her for soul and bride.
So how to manage to put him off?
To get an old-time uncle to doff
His ward, whom he thinks to own,
Give her to you, live his life alone,
Was most like trying to clip
The white sweet out of a lily-lip.
To Clacky I put it—this my plan:
—To find my way I shall know my man—
My uncle kept the one aim in sight,
One thing to do and the only one
Which comes to profit under the sun:
What he should do must be wholly right.
Clacky should see him, tell him of it,
How I loved her, how such love
Comes first in things below, above—

Right makes the only way of profit.
Yet you must all whiles understand
My uncle's soul was aimed at gain
To him in this or other land,
So, to put the whole matter plain,
He stood for doing as near to right
As he could see by his pig-sty sight.
So it happened Clacky came at him
Soon as he found his eye chatoyant,
His belly big, spirit buoyant,
One plump hour to stroke and chat him—
Clacky, his forefinger put close
To his greenstick-fracture nose
He boasted because it showed a bent—
Laid the case out pretty plain
How we were one, just we two,
One heart-rush to one lip-intent,
Love just, never thought of gain—
How more than all of this he knew
That to use his wealth of wit to part us
Might get the girl, would not unheart us—
How all things living go to prove
Luck comes not by crushing love
For gain to you, by way of pelf,
To get another's love for yourself—
How he must, therefore, once to win,
Strike fire for not one spark of sin—
So brought my uncle to his thinking
So he could, leastways, begin to see
My Natalie was made for me
And small use of his minne-blinking.
More than this above all he saw
One way to get his moon-share full
And sky-life after of a gull,
Was to live his days without a flaw.

VII

You must know this was before
Moon grew ashes, shintangle frore;
When land-lap spread, mountain knees
Lifted pea-shoot, penoplume trees
To a point of wild yellow grace
In grass-acre growth, qua-bird quaff
In honey-blob for a lip of laugh,
And all was one mellow garden-place.
Our castle lay in a lush of such,
Amethystine plum, arrowy grass;
There was blue melon overmuch,
Cornelian poppy for a touch
Of beautiful eye which the linnet has.
My uncle was king in his mountain-hatch,
Poked bee-like into garden-patch
For lavender, opopanax;
Country-folk, horizon 'round,
Turned his turf up; man and hound
Swallowed his law down, paid him tax.
Fat he grew there, grew what belly
Shook like a lump of royal jelly
Over his bottleful, Farnese quaff,
Till valleys off I could hear him laugh.
All which he took for clear net profit
Of virtue—there was his view of it
In firm according with his creed:
Play right if you would stuff your greed.
Wealth to him who knows all right
To do it with his mountain-might
Was half of him; his other half
Kept bottle-time to wheeze and laugh.
Should his crawl-pit jump alive,

Castle glass would flicker bright
As fire-points out of sodden night,
All inside like a honey-hive
Was flutter, one school of bees
To pick and sting and eat and sneeze
Their maggot-life out, think it sweet
To go gut-ward—soul lives to eat!
Once things went his way he was brave
As grave-diggers who dig a grave
For neighbor yonder, nor stop to think
They stand there too on the brittle brink.
Long as luck lasted he was great
As men are, after the level run
Of such as fear their lot may be late
Or never under each clocky sun.
To lose all was another matter
Would make his iron back teeth chatter.
See how he went, now the shift came,
This power-house man of topky name,
See what became of his creed
That virtue is a thing men need
As shekels potted in a shop
To purchase Fate by trick of swap.
Long as luck lasted I could keep
My Natalie, since he was gaining
By what he lost, as I was explaining—
What he sowed, that he should reap!
There was his genius of man-magic—
See if the end turned glad or tragic!

I slope my crystal to let slip through
Another streak of white or two—
I have a new blaze, the end is blue.

VIII

Sudden, all as a fire-tongue leaps
From cloud which droops, lazily sleeps,
Came belching of yellowing smoke
From out our moon, through which there broke
Great laps to overlaps of fire
Which melted mountains, roasted mire
Into one yellow-breasted paste
Of moon-melt—I could see
Rivers of it begin to wind
Like tongue-licks across one waste
Of happy country, as if one sea
Of fire emptied on us streaks
Like clouds do, once the lightning leaks.
Think of your earth opening to spew
Red ashes, your hills to pelt
Sky with star-balls, your rock to melt
To plaster fields, make lakes of glue
Where once the poppy-lily blew—
Think of each living thing to fly
In ashes to blot out a sky—
Hot fog to break—one mouth of powder
To chew each last hope into chowder—
Far as you could know, each cleft
Of water-fern, flock of sparrows
To pass out through the narrow narrows,
You just in your eyrie left
Above the wild blast there to perch
Mid-air, a whole world in the lurch—
My word for it, my affidavit,
There the truth is—there you have it!
Right where my man once garden-cared
For asclepias, nut-leaf crop,

I saw men's cinders pinch and hop
Till never a breath was spared.
So high up were we, so tucked
Our castle was inside one arm
Of hornblende, the blue fire sucked
In under us and around us,
Put out each fork of jointed palm
To find, yet never found us.
So saved, as I have said before,
I and my uncle and his sister
And my Natalie and our Clacky,
Compromise 'twixt prince and lackey,
Never one of us scored a blister.

IX

That much was my uncle nipped,
Ground cut under him, wings clipped;
Scarce a nanny-drupe to be had,
Nor pinch of wind to keep life going,
Nor oddy-doddy, good or bad,
Small reaping where was so much sowing.
Night closed thick about the mountain,
Just such kind of pitchfork night
As comes to blast, stays to blight—
Not any more my bubble-fountain
Of over-joy could tie new knots
Of dew-fall into silver spots—
Not any more, like heretofore,
Should tree-lark hark to catch his score
Or to pitch his wildest new key
From the singing throat of my Natalie—
Not any more will I walk abreast
Of stars which shine the titling's nest

Till my fine siren sing his best.
This was it: there was no knowing
Life again as I once knew it;
No place more was left for growing
Hope again where once I grew it.
From night-pit to sun-dawn morn
There was no more—mountains were tilted,
Continents were dropped and wilted,
No moon-map now all place was gone.
So to come to our point pregnant,
How my uncle now would take it
To see his Moon what hell could make it,
Fire-worm uppermost and regnant
Till what he saw made swamp of fire,
Never an inch which an acrospire
Could find to shoot in: you well know
How men are governed by what they grow—
Here was this man with his creed
That men are measured by what they need,
That life and that all I get
Are compensation, ledger-net
For clean performance to make most
Out of what each performance cost;
Yet there he stood, face against luck
Of skull and bones, topmost worst,
As if creation had been curst.
He, my uncle, had been kind
To gentle as a summer wind,
True to each touch—no man knew
How to be leveller or more true;
Beside which he put, *probatum est*,
His shoulder to do his level best.
How would he take it now he saw
Puff-ball in quid-pro-quolic law?

Saw how, small matter if he trued
His life up to his best he could
For gain, that loss of world ensued?
How, do as he might the thing to do
For gain just, do his most he knew,
He found this one thing mastiff true:
New fight was on—he must strike
For more mightiness just to swing
New blows against the evil thing
Heart-first, more man-fashion-like;
How not the thing he is after,
Gold-clutching, pot of laughter,
Make any high kind of an end
Moon keeps in thought, but a way to bend
Life to noblement, put soul in plan
For moulding one first supremest man?
How would he take it once he saw
Higher than compensation-law?
Here lay his one platform-thought
On which to stand: man is to earn
Reward of merit by each new turn
He gives to virtue, come to learn
God-great greatness is sold and bought!
So, so soon as his day came
He should see his country ravished,
Moon-land bundled into flame
Wheresoever once was lavished
Tree-lush, sugar-berry Juning,
Dawn-birds at their steeple-tuning,
He thought how he was face to this,
By vulgar order of proper reason:
All power is one consummate treason
Against man, life is meant to miss,
Virtue to have triumphal reward

Of always the overhanging sword;
Labor is vain, the thing he took
For Beauty fell to the huntsman's hook;
One tin-god series of cheap divining
To reap wrinkles and whining and pining.
Take what way he would to handle
Feast or dance or trumpet-dandle,
He found the play not worth the candle.
Fought he for gain, for profit,
So, soon saw there was nothing such,
Saw hell held him in its clutch,
So reasoned: there comes nothing of it,
Virtue, righteousness, spirit-might,
More than any pigeon-flight
A thumb-length above his trees
To pick crumbs out of the sorrow-breeze,
Drop to tuck his wings in over night.
As man reasons to think it out,
Life inside him and about,
So is his make-up, so he makes hope,
Or fear; so by trying to grope
He learns his sweep of elbow-scope
In one small world, finds his great plan
To measure measure by the man.
Always and just about as near
As man gets truth to think it clear
Life is one crop of hope and fear.
So, once my uncle fairly dropped
Hope out of him, now his crest was cropped,
Seeing, as I saw so plain,
No way was open to profit-gain,
Let us see how he took his creed
That life is just for gain and greed
And measurement by what I need:

x

In my mountain high up—
Now where no daisies
Play, no maize is—
Pokes a lip out like a cup
Where my uncle took to combing
Thought out just at gloaming,
Would sit there, would try to pick
New threads up, trick by trick,
Wallow in thought and in vain
To see if he could clinch
Some purpose in his brain
To live for, if half an inch
Or littler in his vast domain.
One must know we were alone
As stars are, each in his pitfall zone,
We five just, never another
Hairy airy beast or brother,
Never a morning glory
Beyond our castle to tell
One hot side of our story,
How we lived in a Moon of Hell.
Having once lost all his faith
In all things save only death,
My uncle, as men do, let go
His hand from purpose, gave way
To such mellow maudlin pew-gog,
To such droolery each day,
Dropped his soul-man-side so
I could see the dew-fog
Fill his face, see mador
Streak his cheek like a river-adder
Because he could not see

Beyond his Moon in space
Any other time or place
Where he could come to be
Power afresh to conquer pain,
Make for pig-eye gain again.
Once the man in him is gone,
What counts man for building on?
One morning stood up sharp and clear
As starlight in a huntsman's spear;
I went wandering just to know
How far up beyond above
One could gather quill or clove,
Find if sweet maudlin would grow
In such closets of fire and snow
When I came upon the cup,
My uncle there, fine feathers up,
While just beside him and new
As a tree-bud which means to glue
A drupe to the stalk from which it grew
For gratefulness, was my Natalie,
Whom he was cheek to, was plying
For sweet, as the summer-flying
And glistening of any bee
'Round his branch of basil—she
Nested in her lemon flowers
Like a wren in crocus cowers—
Her clean soft eye-look I saw
Pour full at him, never flaw
More than June by frown is browed,
Two lofty blue-lights in a cloud.
Her hand in his was, while thus
He lighted his *ignis fatuus*:
“Destruction is here, you see;
This world is ashes—no more

Comes value of it as before;
The thing is nothing to me;
Any next hour you or I
May get our order to die,
Since death is wanton, makes free
With each living thing I see—
So remains there nought to do;
Nought is left to me save you;
See, too, how all life is vain,
See out over beyond this plain
Where once was jumping poppy,
Rye once rocked, corn was toppy,
With now not a brambling to tell
What brook taught him his gurgling-spell!
I lived best, tuned myself true
To what righteousness I knew,
And here is full dispensation
Of fire and tooth and sling
With not one thumb of compensation
For all my pretty gospelling!
Somehow have I hit it wrong—
Let a man do his farthest might,
There 's no rulery of right
Shall profit him a song!

“Ah, while sun 's in the mountain,
Let us be cloud-like free,
Bubbles ducked in a fountain,
Waves in a sea;
To-morrow, quick to-morrow
Holds you your cup up of sorrow!

“Copy the robin-whistle,
Take his path on the wing

High over frost-bite or thistle
Only to sing
Above you, you that swallow
His song, and your dirge to follow.

“ Copy the wind a-blowing
For shouts of song, for shine,
For gambol of saffron-sowing,
Head above whine,
Above any little knowing
Whence it comes, whither 't is going.

“ Cheek to cheek let us follow
Blue in the mountain air,
Tap the wild hymn of the swallow,
Closet our care!
Gain is loss, there 's no knowing
Whence we come, whither we 're going.

“ Gone is the triumph of fashion,
Gone is law among men;
What 's left but a clasp of passion,
Freedom again?
Hail to the mid-air wooing
Of bluerocks billing and cooing!

“ Lip then to lip be flying
To pick fire out of heart
Ere we commence to be dying!
Summer will part—
Heave at it, life is longing
For more than righting and wronging!”

Thus in the mountain he plyed her,
Right as I eyed him he eyed her—
She like the squab in a butcher's hand
To know not one way to turn
Aside from his jaw-bite, bosom-burn—
Seized her, hand and hand,
Pinned her as a falcon grips
His goldfinch between finger-tips,
Nor would he have let her go,
Save that I gave him one shout
To wake the dead the land about
For warning to let him know
My purpose and my one will
To strike—men have struck to kill
Where innocence is held in pause
For crushing in a dragon's jaws—
When, to my shout, came Clacky too,
Things were wronger than wrong, he knew,
While my true Natalie, while she
Was up like the finch and away to me,
My uncle leaving never a doubt
Of what he was, proved himself out,
As men do, by thought or by deed,
To be not greater than his creed.

Once more I turn my crystalline stone
A thumb-width nearer the moon-beam zone—
Cinnamon-tints in an amber tone!

XI

Next day my aunt, my uncle's sister,
Looking as if the devil missed her,
Snipe-eyed, such one look about
As let me trust her like a doubt,

Jaw set snug to nose and thin,
As if she tried to chew her chin,
Hailed me with this quodlibet,
A snap at the end of it for threat:
"Fair nephew, you make too much
Of greediness and mighty clutch
To put claim to your uncle's ward,
To lord it here as if you were lord,
Grand master and woman-master;
Yours is about the law of duty
Pirates practise, law of booty;
You scarce more than cake of plaster
Stuck against our castle-wall;
What right is yours to so palaver
The girl that you may hope to have her?
From this uncle you have all
God gives to any orphan-born,
While but for him you would have sprouted
Out of a gutter—will you doubt it?
Besides, he is old, his soul is worn,
While she, the cheek-bright Natalie,
Is what is left him of our Moon
We two must part with and so soon;
Left to him that she may lip
His eyelids down as dark days grip,
While you now would rob him of her,
Pick his heart and throat and eye out,
Gleam at him to see him die out,
Play sea-hawk at mossy plover!
Have a care—he feebles, I know,
The best in him begins to go,
Yet, as you have so been told
How men who start to lose a hold
Tighten their grip, beware lest you land

Your throat, by turns, in his closet-hand!"
What was left me to say but she,
My sweet soul of a Natalie,
Was free as mountain-flowers are free
To pile their sweetness here and there,
To tie it to all coiling air?
My trick-uncle she could have,
Or any other mink or Slav,
'Though I knew just to let her be,
She would put her choice on me,
The while my uncle might be heard
To truck and fawn and smicker
Moth-fashion at his star-flicker,
And never I to drop a word.

XII

Next then to win her he must see,
First, his trick to be rid of me;
Always I notice this, how men,
Once they drop the honest might
Which cuts through force by force of right,
Take to wit, to skull-box ken,
Pismire head-work, monkey-slight
By which they may not capture might,
But trick and shy at it an hour,
Come to be swallowed down by power.
First, to drive me out of her thought,
A thing not so all-easily wrought:
Curious cunning must be sought for,
While, as they find who try to prick
The eye of truth out by a trick,
More 's to be thought of than they thought for!
Shortways, this much he concluded:

My birth bore a certain mystery
Was coupled to my after history;
This should be, first off, unsnooded,
I made knowledgeable of what
Had lotted me my nephew-lot.
So, once one evening drew its bow
Of orange across one peak of snow
To split it like an arrow sent
Into the bull's-eye firmament,
My uncle followed me on up
Into my high resting-cup
Where I thought so to be alone
To try to think one purpose out
Life could have in such a blown
And wasted hemisphere about.
He told me of my father, his brother,
How he took for wife my mother
All against his father's will,
Who, for such reason, straight provided
His fortune should not be divided,
Should go to my uncle for good or ill,
Unless it should happen my mother
Should one day come to wed another—
In such case then was made provision
His domain should have division
Among his heirs, so to compel
My uncle to look to it pretty plain
He kept my mother from wedding again—
Such the undreamable lynx in men!
Should she have taken second mate
My uncle must forfeit his estate.
With this he went to tell me how
He contrived my mother should bow
To his will—night was now trying

To spoil a spot of mushroom dyeing
When, through the dark, down he pointed,
Down to the castle where one tower
From the others looked unjointed,
Looked extra-knuckled for extra power,
'Though cracking old, once was a cookery,
Now more like a broken rookery,
Till straight at us, straight through the bars
Of one small window looking east,
Looked a light the glare of an evil beast,
The dance in it of a dozen stars,
When, right there, he said, just in there
My mother was his prisoner
He put there such long years before
He scarce could summon up their score,
For once concluding she would wed,
All in spite of him, as she said.
None knew she was there closeted,
Save my speckled aunt, his sister,
Who gave it out that she was dead,
So, only as being dead, men missed her.
She had come old, he breathed to say,
Yet would he not give her flight
Lest she should wed again for spite,
All in spite of her age, one day.
There had he held her most her life
To pinch out in an attic-pit,
A wren coiled to a huntsman's spit,
Nor mother again, nor friend nor wife—
How could he steel him to doing it?
Told he next how my father died
Of a sudden, ere I was born;
How he tore me from her side
As infant, how her hope was gone

With me lost to her, how she went
Half cheerful to her prisonment:
How, by time, I grew to love him,
My uncle—nought reigned above him.
Mark now this his overture:
Should I renounce my Natalie,
Quit claim to him finally,
Give her up to him to have
For wife and proselyte and slave,
He would, by way of compensation,
Lead me to the tower where I
Should see my mother, my first friend
Before she took her turn to die
In the tower there where rooks descend
Like so many little sorrow-people
To bring their friendship to the steeple.
Go I should by each day's rise
To her lonely temple, hold her close,
Fetch wild hyssop, edelweiss,
Fetch her hooks of holly-rose
To soften the stones to such kind eyes
As dropped their dew-light out of tears
To the wilted leaf in each cheek,
Flowers would knit again, blossom, speak
All as once in her girleen years.
My mother—I her foundling son,
We two, to be once more just one,
As when, in that last April nap,
I lay snuggled to her lap
For such oneness, such wealth of love,
Man turns all heart for thinking of.
Oh friend, be sure of this in me,
I forgot there was any Natalie;
I forgot my uncle's tyrant-trick

To crush the life-size out of her
Who gave me life—I forgot to stir;
You could hear my bosom prick
With, first, the thought to strike him,
With then the thought to like him,
To hold him close for brother
Who brought me back my mother,
Like whom the sweet world brings no other,
Whom I thought lost to me, gone
That great grief-week I was born,
She the blood and only soul of me,
Deepest very heart and whole of me
I was to have again, was to save
From death's death on a dungeon-spit—
Oh God, the very thought of it,
To clasp a mother from the grave!
So said I yes, my thousand yesses,
He could have my Natalie,
Have her, oh that gladly!
Her melon lip, claret tresses,
Have her, everything was of her,
To be her monarch-mate and lover.
For that he should lead me next day,
This same time, plump on the hour,
By one snakish narrow way
Which serpented towards the tower
Through such labyrinth as only he knew
Where tongue and fang of it pointed to.

XIII

Next day was my aunt about,
Would aim at me with pointed snout
To know what went, how my uncle came

To look to her not half the same,
Like somewhat were so pinching his brain
He thought worth thinking over again
As men do who are not full certain,
Now that or this new point is sifted,
As if the spirit lowered and lifted
Cloud, betimes, like a hanging curtain!
As if she were not puffed with knowledge
Down to just the smallest small edge
Of what my uncle's brain was doing
While she bottled what he was brewing!
She knew—there 's the why she kept
Knowledge to herself—you know
How small minds think it sharp-adept
To play at ignorance so to feel
They work a wheel within a wheel
To put you thinking contrariso—
Next, after once was glutted
Her lust of cunning, her fox-fancy
For trick-work, cheap necromancy,
Here 's her way she piped and stutted:
"So you have found sense, it seems,
To drop off your cock-lofty strut,
Your head-breeze, lap-dog dreams!
Having found you have a mother,
Have an uncle for a brother,
You can find an 'if' or 'but'
For Natalie—so like you men,
An old love off for a new one when
The whim tickles. In this case
You do well to mend your ways
To travel backward to one whose arms
Took you when you were nought, take part
And lesson of such true great heart

To re-youth her, to put back charms
Of geranium at her wilted cheek.
—More is her heart than soul may speak—
A blueling in a lap of maize,
Fingers of phlox where sunfall plays,
And those are wonderful days
When a man, like a pink bud, lies
For the life of him under two warm eyes
Of dew-shine and such love
He begins to chuckle and puff
For more, never to get enough,
And the flower may open to spread
For wonderment against his skies,
Hold his world in extasies,
Yet will come back to him the sweet same eyes
Always and always, looking or dead!
Natalie I saw this early morning,
Told her of my brother's warning
To you—how your mother was there
For prisoner to cormorant care
Unless you came to her—how you
Quickly decided between the two,
And, soul-high-ripened as no other,
You chose the heart-beat of the mother.
Doubt not once the greatness of it,
Doubt not any world would love it
'Though each town should come unsteeped
And the universe unpeopled—
Think you mere people make for what
Runs highest in universal thought,
That once this love is body-blended,
Once this human heart is matched
And mated, and broods are hatched,
The glory of God is done and ended?"

XIV

This one evening, tap on time,
I took my uncle at his word—
Clock-hand now begun to chime;
Nought was new in it; I had heard
The hardened music there as boy,
Blow upon blow if a neighbor died,
Harder blows if a maiden sighed
To shrink at marriage-altar joy,
As if for this lesson to humankind:
The blow first, one hardest blow
Men shrink from, try to stifle so;
Comes then the echo just behind
Turns to such sweetness on the wind.
Such the way that evening with me,
I caught one wild minstrelsy
Which sweetened up the air so about
With its tongue-licks and honey-shout
I could hear and know nought other
Than this—I was to see my mother!
So, on the hour, I was by him,
My purpose now to test and try him;
Natalie, be it understood,
I was not to see again
In this life, if I would or should—
So much was settled and made plain.
Good as his word we took up march,
First, through each new northerly arch
To one roundish court, then straight
To the night-bell over Griffard Gate,
As it was known, for claws of a hawk,
To open both wings out with a squawk.
Through here we came on an open ditch—

Deep it was, narrow and dark
As space is 'twixt tree and bark—
One deep small ladder descended
With never suspicion of a pitch—
Not knowing where in earth it ended
Would make a lion's liver twitch
—I go first, my guide-uncle next—
Descensus Averni made our text
I kept in mind as we began
To leave this world, drop on drop,
Till I thought we could never stop,
So dark it looked where the ladder ran,
While, save for my full force of will,
I think I should think I was dropping still.
End came at last—there we stood
At the pit-bottom—you may know
There were touches of brotherhood
Now we could feel the undertow
Of darkness, could get not a trace
One of the other, hand or face.
How one touch of danger bends
To soften and make us friends!
Stood we firm in the ladder-plinth
At the opening of such labyrinth
Of trick-angles and ringlet-links
A man is lost who stops or thinks,
Since through it all, hark all your hark,
Nought was there but thickest dark
To look to to face you back
Defiance, like a mask of black.
No man could think his way one hair,
Save that he knew both trick and key
To match and unhinge the mystery
Which else meant certain death was there.

This was it: there ran one railing
About as high as a man's hip
Along which you let finger slip
To feel (there must be no failing)
For a notch, then one tiny cliff
Nicked in the rail each twenty feet
For sign to you, like a hieroglyph
Stuck at one corner of a street
To let you know, could you read the text,
Which ugly corner would come next.
Any miss of a chip or dot,
Any forgetfulness how it read,
One small lapse of wiful thought
And **you** companion with the dead.
I took his hand, walked well behind—
How thought makes havoc of a man
If night be on him!—what if his plan
And purpose were so cold inclined
As to drop me—there was scarce a span
To link us, and I knew my man
—How I clinched his hand behind!—
What if he weakened, dropped his mind!
Not for myself I was so shrinking,
But for her in the tower there—no thinking
Would put me right—chill sweat put chase
To two sharp glow-spots in my face
As came one thought which pricked and haunted:
I was that close uncled and aunted,
The two between them plain could see
Round ownership of Natalie in fee
Could they contrive to be rid of me!
Crept such follies through my brain—
Them you forget, you do not forget
How they made you wince and sweat,

Then sweat and wince all over again—
More than an hour we were groping
This way, that way, all so slowly
The end looked black as melancholy
For any taste of human hoping
When, at a wink, we were out
In a kind of round redoubt
Of such masonry and that broad,
Sunk so far below the sod
I thought of it as an arm of God.
This was the tower, shot from just there
Where we stood into upper air,
Force-foremost, that mountain-proud,
Nor stopped once till it pricked the cloud!
One round step-way curled to make
One coil-up, like a springing snake
Against the stars, spy-spiral sent
To climb where it licked the firmament!
No entrance other was to be found,
Apart from this rat-hole underground,
A man could take to, coming or leaving,
And the web of it past all believing.

xv

Now to ascend! There was such dark,
Deaf-mute darkness was around,
Since we stood so deep underground
No light could leak a little spark.
My uncle first—how he could crawl
With neither slip nor trip to fall,
Knew his way so —such no-blunderment
Filled me fully full of wonderment!
Each time he would lift a foot

To take a new step on the stair,
Each small creaking of a boot
Fell to me like music there—
Was I not rising, round by round,
To where my whole heart could be found,
Now each new step I took, each stir
Put me one footfall nearer her
Who waited, who knew not I
Came reaching for her towards the sky?
Till, as I rose, each step came lighter,
Dark grew dim, the tower brighter,
So as I drew to near the top,
Thought of her door where I should stop,
That light-footed was I, it seemed
Weight was gone, the whole sky schemed
To trick me and I only dreamed,
For, right where I was come to stay,
I felt half spirited away.

XVI

We were come to the tower-top now—
There was one small window in it
To look off, like the eye of a ginnet,
Straight at our moon-mountain-brow;
One small hall was where we stood
To face one little iron door
Made round too—never its like before—
I kept my look at it agood
To see my uncle fingering,
Watch him push one hidden spring
Which shot two iron bolts plump out
Like two tusks through a boar's snout—
There it opened, while just inside

Lay one semi-circum room,
One other just such eye-hole in it
To put me thinking of the ginnet,
Knew not the whisper of a broom
For past all memory of man—
Bring this to you, if you can,
How God-made, God-likest man,
Having each failing of his race,
Could harden him, like a pelican,
To pouch a sister in such place
Where such mouth of darkness licked her
To wind about her heart and face
Coils to crush like a boa-constrictor—
For there, close to us now inside,
Just one thinnest touch of light
Which lay at her two lips like blight,
She as one who that day died,
Hands crossed as if in death,
Heedless if she drew a breath,
Was my mother, just the gentle mother—
How sure I knew her for no other!
Passed he in, my uncle first,
Whom I could have blest and curst,
Stood at the window to look out,
Back to us, hands both behind him
Clearly so we should not mind him,
Or so he might not look about
To see what he must shrink to see,
Such meeting 'twixt my soul and me—
And you—why, you would never look
One glance within such private book
Of love like that, nor could I tell
The Heaven of it, the wordless spell
Of joy, of unworldly power

Of soul and soul to melt in one
In Heaven's way, now all was done—
I held her for such love that hour
As, come what may in the world again,
Could find no matching among men.

XVII

Now for quick thought to make the best
Of such supernal climax, lest
I lose a point—how mind will break
To split up into sparks of thought
Curiously, marvellously wrought
If a life you love be at stake!—
For quicker than my uncle could see
If he turned to look, which he did not,
I seized my mother close to me
By both arms, then like a shot
Was at the rounded door and through,
Dragging the iron eye-lid behind
Which shut like a jaw with a hungry grind
All as quick as I snapped it to,
And, lo, my captor was capped,
He by his own trick was trapped,
Left bonded and my convict there,
My uncle and my prisoner!
Now for escape—None!
Not one step to it under the sun,
Save through the deep dark underneath—
No crawling ever between those teeth
Without him—so where to turn?—
I could feel my eyeballs burn,
Lip twitch—then thought would stir:
Was I there not his prisoner,

He mine? Must we not rise
To some safe kind of compromise
By understanding, beyond doubt,
We help each other to get out?
Have you thought ever you could pet
A panther, now he looked so calm
You thought to safely stroke his palm
For pastime, coax him to forget
His foaming frenzy of wild rage,
Make friend to him, yet ogled shy
If he began to nose too nigh,
To conclude, on the whole, it were sage
To keep him just inside his cage?
Mostly that way was how I felt,
Having in mind his nails, my pelt—
So were we locked in the tower-cop.
The case looked dark and difficult,
For we could neither go nor stop
With only the panther to consult,
When, on our stairway, click by clack
Came footfalls—I can hear them now
Stroke the stairway on the brow—
I hearked to get each little smack,
Leaped to look, called out to know
Who came there, what went below,
When royal Clacky answered back.
How he could come I could not see—
He could not know a chink or crum
To point him which way he should come—
How Clacky, no thought over pie-height,
Could have taken to such high flight
Was mystery—yet there he came
For light to us, like a tongue of flame,
Clacky—no doubt there he was,

Ready to take the woman's cause,
Wrong or right, whichever it was,
To put his soul against the planet—
So 't was I let him plan and man it
To get us out—he knew how,
Knew much of what my uncle meant
To do by his tower-tanglement,
So was he that plump-hearted now
To friend us, took us down the strip
Of steps which groaned from crown to hip,
Which talked, yet never moved a lip,
Took us through the no-end maze
Of quadrants and split-finger-tricks
And out again into those warm days
And side-hills the sweet wind licks.

XVIII

Days were now gone since we two
Were ticketed to leave the tower,
My mother and I—such wing-days flew
As found us, each new painted hour,
Love-bound, mother just and son,
From sun-up always to sun-under,
My uncle in his trap to wonder
How well it worked, if once begun,
How well he loved the law of blunder!
Natalie was not to be seen—she too,
Like the days about us, was gone,
Spirited away and no one knew
What tree she was picketed on
Or where to look that she be found,
Save in some pit-puzzle under ground.
My aunt took stomachful of bother

Moon Fields, or Man the God

All to try to free her brother,
Till sudden brain-work put her thinking:
She should make love to Clacky,
Win him, make him her Jo-Jacky—
Well, you should have seen her blinking,
Toe-straight tenor if she walked,
How she curlicued and balked,
Furbelowed and pinked and chalked,
Then two daubs of silver paint
For swooning and playing saint,
While not one thought for Clacky more
Than any squiggle of a wrasse
Or small intent his tail-bob has
Right as he pins a gnat ashore.
Wealth was her portion, wealth of gold
I saw no sign of, yet was told
Her share in her mother's estate
Was largened to truly great.
Cunning Clacky, by all his reading,
Came heady as a ball of dough,
Seemed to need a little kneading
Ere he could fill to grow and know
Beyond his yellow metallurgy,
For always, both as young and old,
He had Jew-genius for boxing gold,
Loved the shine in it, quill-splurgy—
Give him that, you could see him lapse
Like thought which winks between the naps,
Dull as an oyster in his shell
That fats and fouts and all is well.
Now his old back begins to righten,
Boot to shine, tie to tighten,
Bosom-gladful to make a tool
For chance, once, to play the fool.

Saw I the thing would never do,
Aunt and Clacky to count for one—
This much I saw of what was true:
From such instant as Clacky was won,
My uncle falconed in the tower,
All would go to the coupled two
And poor outlook for mother and son
And uncle from that union-hour.
Would they be left alone to clamber,
Stuck for death in this yellow Moon
Like two flies in a thumb of amber,
They thought not of—how passing soon
Uses of gold slip thought like an elf
Once eyes are pinned to the coin itself,
As if a man came hypnotized
By such yellow eye, nor realized
His whole soul fastened by its glare
To look not sideways nor elsewhere!
So came conference among us three,
Clacky and my aunt and me
That I might try—I thought, perhaps,
I could put Clacky to his taps,
Albeit if my aunt once cackled
Clacky would dilate, tap-shackled,
Nor mind to move, scarce could he speak
To gather one thought in the week,
So wholly was he overcome
Just by her low dreary drum
Of fondness for him, till he thought:
There may be men would look alive,
Would strike their knuckles off to wive,
But Clacky is somewhat to be sought!
“Now,” said I, “here you have it,
True as dingey is to davit:

Gone is this Moon, little is of it
Now a man could think to covet;
Marriage would be for little use
As feathers in a gutted goose;
An end is now of mating, of death,
Of birth—we draw one little breath
Which is left; scarce is there air
Enough about us for five to share,
Or rib-up—look for a lomp,
Look for one tiny xiphias
Or May-apple, for a spike of grass
To prop a poppy in a swamp!
Nothing has worth—think you shall you
Pouch a nickel for its value
When in the land no more is wrought
An ilex to be sold or bought?
Moreover, there is now my uncle
In his cage—I hear him crunkle,
See him sweat so he may see
One justice works eternally,
Yet, fairly as our job is jobbed,
I have no mind to see him robbed.
So look you, unless this folly-bride
And bridegroom-plan be tucked aside
I give you this: all past a doubt
I 'll break his cage and let him out!"
You should see the aunt-eyes beam
Like two head-lights of a bream
Fixed on a weevil in a stream!
Up she was, arms all over
Clacky, as a wasp will hover
To clinch to rifle a tuft of clover!
Always I see, if a world of care
Be taken to do a thing unfair,

Just the right wit is wanting there!
No sooner now had Clacky once seen
Her eyes grew all her tyrant fire
At mention of her soul-desire,
To free her brother quick and clean,
Than he was quick to see the claw
Just inside her love-making maw!

XIX

My aunt, with all her apple-prim practice
To taste all facts to find what one fact is,
Let free one morning how she knew
Where Natalie was, yet thought it best
To keep such knowledge from the rest
For so many reasons she could not tell
How she came to such thought so well.
This much she could guarantee
For truth as touching Natalie:
She was contented as a bee
In a bud shut up where he only knows
His pink sweet chamber of satin rose,
Nor cares how the outside bubble blows.
Clacky she gave up for worse
To pocket than a miser's purse;
She thought my uncle in the rookery
Should have a taste of his own crookery—
So peace dominioned, things were well
As could be in our kind of hell
Which was life to such little end
One could see scarce what to do,
While, barring us five, not a friend
But he was gone—there were few
Patches left in our mountain-stoop

Where could grow a quill or drupe—
Life came hard, looked at through
Mole-peeps out of eyes of glue
Men so prize to stickle to—
That 's to say, men make for what
Has value by the common lot,
That which may be sold or bought,
Piled up, eaten, sung, vowelled,
One wherewithal for smell or touch,
If only an onion at a clutch,
So my man go pretty-bowelled
As if he grew a gut to pack it
To one end, that he plump his jacket
To live his days out—no plan of a plan
To measure up such kind of man
As stakes all for no other than
To make of him all there is of a man.
So, if one first purpose be this,
Not to give out, but to get what is,
And he lose what, to him, is all,
To wit, the one thing he is after,
Treacle-pot, sun-heap, volley-laughter,
Then is his star past-finding small,
Then worlds fly up that they may fall.
To make lustration: Clacky once thought
One pretty field-patch could be sought
Where my aunt and he, once they married,
Might compass peace if old age tarried,
One henbane lot near the Villa Peach,
Now not a bee-song within reach,
Pin-apple nor scops-owl screech.
So said I to him: "What is your use
Of space, of any mere Moon-acres
With not an inch to gain or lose,

The place clean stripped of cakes and bakers,
Locklords and swampish hellebores
And wine-trees and fastened doors?—
Free as the raining sun-down pours
You own these mountains, score and scores,
This whole Moon-pot world is yours!”
There he hiccupped and was off
Into the kind of booby-cough
A man will play at once he clinches
Truth to find the truth so pinches
He will not want you should know
How like the devil it pinches so,
So begins to trick and quobble
In his gills to twist your thinking,
Mix you in his wind-pipe squabble
So you shall not mark his shrinking.
Dropped his jaw like an apron-flap
Full of plums—I give it a slap
And nought is left but the empty lap!
So much for Clacky and his marriage,
His Villa Peach, his calamint,
Blue wine, velvet carriage,
With just his little keyhole squint
At truth—truth meant to shape a soul
Out of a moon, shape the rose in bole.

XX

One morning, just at day-rawe,
Nothing in the castle to stay for,
I and my mother took to ambling
In the mountain, above our villa,
If we might hear a brambling,
Pick a switch of alfilerilla,

Moon Fields, or Man the God

Watch the princely morning stripe
A rock like a thrush when his breast is ripe.
We two just—yet were we one
More than dawn and yellow sun—
Oh, what belly-less human blunder
Could put such love as ours asunder?
Each the other tried to hearten,
Looked for glow-fly, beach-marten,
Any kind of small exertion
To scrape a handful of diversion,
While straight through our solemnest while
Would come one look-alert of hers,
As a throstle's eye when a blossom stirs,
As 'round it lay her rainbow smile,
While each day I could see she grew
Foot-feeblor, part thinner through,
Would pull, by times, for a breath
As they who are in tug with death;
So was the gifted air burnt out,
Came scarce a gulletful about;
Peach-meats, quince or ople-tree
Or strip of purple bitter-balled
Vine-climber of grapish gree
Were most of all which one could see
To tempt him, now stomach small'd.
Housed in one angle of a notch
Where fire struck once to cut a scotch,
We rested, her pale hand on mine
For such June-touch a man remembers
When life is only all Decembers
And only thought is palatine.
"This Natalie," she went on to say,
"What of your loss of her?
You gave her up for me that day

Your uncle made such stir
About what I could not understand
Was coining in his cunning hand—
Should you not go to her now,
Take her for love, keep her for wife
After the way the world knows how?—
There 's the meaning of Moon and life
And purpose, far as men see it
Who mean to swallow the world and be it;
Minnows we to tickle in a stream
Where star-balls out of every sky
Dot the water, eye for eye,
Just shadow only, only a dream
Which catches never one real star,
But only what it seems to seem,
And things are nowhere what they are.
Then, therefore, will it all behoove
Man that he mind his pie-wise ways
To grub and grunt, make sport of love,
Have pastime and pretty days—
All is below, nothing above
Save stars to fly to—there 's truth enough!"

This-wise I answered: "If things seem
Not what they are, but are only dream
Illusion, then back of them must be
Their cause, one real reality;
So, if I stick to what I need
Life-wise, that is to say, to breathe,
Kick, eat, paddle till I teethe,
Get to love enough to breed,
I live only to sleep and dream
Things which are not what they seem,
While comes my second thought—for sample,
Take love as men do, think it ample:

Should I turn back to Natalie,
There would be love such as I see
The world makes most of, comes to covet
To live by, then lives to love it,
And nothing nobler for gonfalon
Than just this world to whirlpool on,
Men to multiply more and more
For their level gains of heretofore,
Keep to one course without a blunder
By all ways of least resistance
So they may live to love existence,
Mark time only to knock under,
And life will have sparowed—their small spell
Will ripple in one passing-bell
Which has no more than this to tell:
Gluttony gluttoned and all is well!
By my promise I am under
I put my Natalie asunder
For you, O unforgotten mother,
For love such as could have no other
In all my group of years
To match it out of yonder sky
Which touches so deep, soars so high,
Yet makes no end of clinging spheres!
One love just, only my love,
To look not beyond it, not above
To question if it be enough
To have a purpose, to gain an end
More than one endless spirit-friend,
One soul-mate, so fine, so true
The stars must widen to let you through.”
There ’s my best—nor counts the rest,
So I get all my mighty best,
Which is that which I was made for,

What earth's earth-worms better spade for
To not be thinking so soggily much
Of how to burrow, of what to clutch.
Since things are not what they seem,
But a dream, then just another dream,
And I find how what in me is best
Runs counter to what makes for power
And prosperment for just a nest
Of gold-heap to yield one hour
Of sun-vine, of little glitter
That I may pipe my sparrow-twitter,
Have I not proof enough just so
That what in me is loftiest best
Goes not the way the grub-worms go
Under conqueror custom east and west,
But contrawise, as soars my love
So far from this Moon and above
As to have small use here to serve an end
Or Moon-purpose—witness her hand
I hold now and I would not give
My hold of up, if even to live
And love and prosper in any land
Of unsurpassable blossomy breath—
Rather my love which reasoneth
The world is second, gain and the rest
Which make for power and brood and nest,
Once give me that in me which is best
That I may silence and sink the rest.
So say I, since those things I see
Are other than what they seem to be,
That what once is or ever was
Has back of it one nobler cause
Than what, to my seeing, all things are,
And I my choice to trim and spar

The Moon-way just to keep my hold
On brood and power and cake of gold,
Or to come above it for just my reason
That I find such soul in me
As loves to be so out of season
With what I taste or touch or see,
Has learned the right of mighty treason
Against what only seems to be,
Towers towards true reality—
Then will I seize yon rainbow-tie
Which tries to ribbon-knot a sky,
And, be the view off unending-far,
I tie me all knots to my rising star.

XXI

Fall is all. Trees have lost their lips;
No whisper where the south wind slips,
Only mute signs from finger-tips.
Sun-beam and apricot-rod
Hit at each other, like as before—
Now only the dumping nod,
Never the rose's red vein more.
A trick-eagle—one which Clacky had
For scholarship, knew good and bad,
Would light at his shoulder-strap to perch
For solemn as an empty church,
Flap at his eyes to set him winking,
Scratch at his head to put him thinking,
Pluck him, man-fashion, by an ear
To pull bell out so he could hear
If one were talking not very near—
Brings one odd thing to mind: this bird
Would take possession of the tower

Where was my uncle, would fold and cower
To captain the place—rook was not heard
Or seen in any near pinaster,
So was he mighty there and master.
One clean morning, right as I turned
To lead my mother down our slope
Where sun in dead alfalfa churned
Wild lemon, May-pop, heliotrope,
Flew there this bird from the tower
Plump at us, like an arrow pricks
The wind so not a dew-bead sticks,
Head-on for his whole eagle-power
With just inside his lemon beak
One white flap he would not unloose
—It might have been a flag of truce—
Looking like he would like to speak.
There he hovered, plumb above us,
Forty feet scarce out of reach
As, with his kind of hobble-screech
Never meaning he could love us,
On he went circling in mid air
As if to tempt us to look there,
When, with one puff-ruffle to us
In one new kind of milder tone,
One not born of hucklebone,
He dropped the white flap down to us!
My uncle's missive—thus it read:
“Once give me freedom, you may take
Natalie and mother both—my stake
My castle, with all I crave,
Myself to boot for

“Your Very Slave.”

What to do, how to answer?
Sooner would I crave a cancer

Moon Fields, or Man the God

At this throat than one clean grip
'Twixt his thumb and finger-tip.
Liar, he, to the back-teeth, he,
Now stript of his principality
Of right, there being nought he saw
Now left worth being rightful for!
On t' other hand look: he was human
As any man, as any woman
To want greatness, once he knew
Greatness in me to button to.
Go we so in pairs, we human;
That I find in my Yahoo-man;
How to make a man your prisoner?—
Put him squarely so on his honor.
Lives there no kind of human art
Like trusting me to touch my heart.
So, too, my honest word he had,
Come what might come, good or bad,
I shall never once ask to see
Or know again of my Natalie.
I shall not take a man in a trap
To pinch his liver, fetch him my rap
To trim my purpose by his fate;
Such might be fashiony—never great.
My terms with him so fast were fixed,
While, 'though the prisoners got mixed
In his tower-trap, shifted places,
I must not balk nor jump the traces.
Hovered there above us our eagle
'Round and 'round, as if he swirled
To circum-dominate a world
To talon-tie it to his regle.
This I saw, he was not skating
Clouds for nought—there he was waiting:

So wrote I on the reverse side
My missive: "You are free!
Natalie is yours, too, for bride,
So you leave my mother to me."
This much I tossed to the wind,
While quicker than I could see,
Quick as the leven looks to be,
My eagle was down and had it pinned
And back again with his whole feline
Screech to point and track a bee-line
To the tower to know his master's fate
Right as the clock-hand counted eight.

I turned my sky-quartz down instead
To see what a wider angle said—
The lip was white, but the breath was red.

XXII

I saw not my uncle after that;
Chagrin at what he elbowed at,
Once to rob me of my mother,
Once to rob her of her share
Of rainbow-bridge, lilac air,
Cheat her of chance, then to smother
Each fine whisper which tried to rise,
Would force a lynx to turn his eyes
Away from her, away from me
By the felon-look which hates to see.
He died, as most men will die,
Looking for somewhat, pumping his sigh
For more palace, for less need,
Any new way to root and feed,
To play gullet, to pipe tricks

Mouth-up, soul-under in the Styx.
How I have wondered how men
Come to their dry longing again
For what 's about, to get a hand
At new clutching, twitch a latch
To open the new Paradise-hatch—
Most as a child if he be squeezed
Into shouts of holiday joy
By pinching his new trumpet-toy
Nor knows his own soul, how it is pleased.
Just as if I am not more
Than Moon fields, or tapestried shore
Of swimming worlds, or fiddle-faddle
Atoms which seek to play and paddle,
More than this privilege to live
Throat-fashion by my world-way,
More than I seem or you may say,
Or any Heaven which Heaven could give!
So say I how I have wondered
How men have twisted and so blundered
Into this, that any potter's clay
Or anything of earth or heaven,
Outside of soul, which could be given
To men for them to have and hold,
Their love of throat, their doll-gold,
Could be of value more than they!
So, as they live to think, they die,
Dying to think a kind of hope
Which keeps at asking "how," "why,"
Or what 's outside this envelope
Of dew and dust to grasp
While they fetch their smothered gasp,
Never rising once like Gods
To die and never count the odds!

What is this last sorrow-sigh
I draw, now I lie down to die,
Save my first breath of divinity?
Count you your gains by tens, elevens,
This life, any life, power, pelf,
Yet this one omnipresent self
Counts higher than a hundred heavens.
What boots this privilege of mine
To die, save one more chance to play
The man to dominate my way
By masterdom, the trick divine?
So, if I look to sum the sum
Of struggle where once I fought,
Whether of life or death or what,
Whether I won at it or not,
The thing was there to be overcome
For mightiness, one God-grown plan
Meant to spirit, to man the man.
To die is divine—oh, be so sure
No star points an eyelet truer
To see beyond dark, all ways,
What the wish winks, heart says
Is true of your struggle or mine:
One last breath at it is divine!

XXIII

How they die, these people,
Looking to their church-steeple
To point somewhat, one new grist
Of cheap chaff, somewhat they have missed,
Anything, so they see it plain,
A new play, a profit gain
To pocket one eyeful of pelf—

Devil take this eminent self
Which can compass so much, climb
Each high Heaven so that the climb
And not the Heaven is the thing sublime!
How small it looks, this day-life size,
Since, howsoever great the prize,
No man lives greater than he dies!
For now came my aunt—she next
Began to falter, read the text
Which bubbled about us how we
Are come here just to effort to be
What there is of us, count not the odds,
Whether there be loss or gain,
If the end look large or vain,
But men to be men, since "Ye are Gods."
Sour as a pickle-jug across face,
Each wrinkle playing out of place,
Came my aunt this day—I could see
Her turn was next, her hand pass passes
Before her just to brush away
Death-heads which were spitting gases
Of nightshade meant only to slay.
The meaning in it she knew as I did,
To wit, her Moon-doom was decided,
So she must go her way, your way,
My way—there 's the open doorway—
One only question my time being,
Far as my plain eyes are seeing,
Will I play coward so I go
As if the devil dared me so,
Or stand, man-fashion as a God,
Grin my grin at the yawning sod?
Came there my aunt, was catching staggers,
Wrought her spleen-best to look daggers,

Her night-pit face of that sour scowl
Would make a dog back back to howl,
All because I dropped not a word
For bait, could not play parson-bird
To croon, crop-stuff her to think
The thing to look to across the brink
Is some crown-jewel-catch-me-kink!
She took her way, she would have it,
Fast fastened as an affidavit:
She must keep her greed to go on
So to surpass an entozoön;
The thing to clutch at counts for king,
Not any royal Godful fling
Of integral power which comes of Right,
Of pure purpose, almighty striving
For more than this mere honey-hiving
Or empyrean peak in sight.
Never that for her crop ever;
But aught to get to, to take hold of,
Like her Moon to make her gold of,
One chance more to be so clever
At keeping soul and body together
By thought about as even great
As a spoonbill when he slues his pate
Due east to gripe and wipe a feather!
Will a man get greated by hope,
Not by facing force, 'though he grope
To not know ever where he goes
Nor why, save to make him man
And master on one sky-like plan
Which lets him reap the what he sows,
Pluck up more the less he knows,
Like a sailor more mans his bark
Who cuts his seas down through the dark?

Hope pets, dandles, softens, bribes;
My sky-like plan hurls out gibes
Of shot, or thunders diatribes,
Looks faceful of threat by frowns—
Man makes strong by what he downs.
So she overlooked herself—most do—
To see if she could make out a case
Of claim to some one better place
By her glut-eye of the cockatoo.
She died her way—so the beetle-breeze
Dies in a bunch of cockle-trees—
There 's my skimmer-bee flies over
His mallow-bed, sea of clover,
To nest in one poppy, red-breast fair
Of promise—he sucks no syrup there.

XXIV

Next to find Natalie—my aunt gone
And uncle, all she leaned upon,
I by my promise no longer bound,
Here was law—Natalie must be found.
So to it Clacky and I put head
And heel, each to play ferret
To nose the castle, pit to garret,
Till not in the winding place was trestle
Or box-lock where we did not wrestle
To find her—we took smart care
To well below and over-stair
So not a well-end but was searched
To the bell-tower where the eagle perched,
Yet was no Natalie lurking there.
What could 'come of her?—he could not
Have left her somewhere cornered to die,

For lack of dew, after the lot
Of wake-robin in parching plot—
So was it Clacky there and I
Kept musing through the night to know
Where she could be, how she could slink
To where not one of us could think,
So were we boxed and puzzled so.
Could it be, when my uncle went,
He took her with him, the sly dog,
To bear her above fire and fog
Into the roundabout firmament?
For so have I known men to say
They had mighty leaning such way
To take the loved one with them too
Into their dark whereunto—
My doubt is if he went her way!
Kept we our musing, Clacky and I,
This way, any way about it
Till—so it seemed—they let her die
And never word to us—no doubt it
Pleased, in my uncle, the selfish cur
To know I could not look to her.
Plumb on the instant when I sighed
To think of it, how she must have died,
The world between us so hard and wide,
Came there one bell-note from the tower
Put white streaks across our faces,
Twitched our tough hearts from their places—
A bell—and, too, at such night hour
To go on tolling, so softly tolled
Into darkness where it rolled
I thought the tongue in it was souled,
Or, like enough some night-hag hovered
To tap it when the sun was covered—

We three only, Clacky and I
And my mother in our wasted Moon
Now left to undertake a sigh,
Notice a moss-cheeper out of tune—
My mother in her hallway sleeping
Like her last sleep—scarce was creeping
Breath enough to her lip for thought
To tell if she were there or not,
Now I harked for any culver
To croon, any lisp of hulver,
As went on tolling the tower-bell
For all things like our passing knell,
Now I and Clacky were surely coming
To the bell-cote—we were there to see
The author of such devilish drumming,
What meant it, what the thing could be,
When, lo, there our king-eagle was,
The bell's tongue fastened in both claws,
He flying out so back and forth,
Now due south, now due north,
To fetch, by turns, the gong a rap
Each time he touched on either side,
His sailor-wings spread open wide,
Shut to again, flap on flap,
As if he strove his most to fly
To swing his bell-song toward the sky
So we might think it his own ring
And he the song-eagle—bell and wing!

XXV

Natalie was gone—small doubt of that
Conclusion we were settled at—
The truth in it was all along

Her castle wall, in the eagle's gong,
In every genuflexion or sigh
Of her linden-tree—which said good-bye.
To think I so loved her, and she gone,
And I not one small whisper to her
So much as any leaf will stir
If a last breath of day be drawn!
Mine was another love than now,
My last love which takes no vow—
Who shall say what love is or how
It conquers so to get of a man
The God in him always, which it can
In proportion just to each fine kind
Of soul is his, dominion-mind
And heart—see how there he goes,
Bee-fashion, dives for sweet all over
To tumble in his lap of clover
Nor minds the blush, lets not his rose
Blind him to the sweet which flows,
And he clips only the treacle-best,
The wild cold wind may have the rest
Of sweetness and that gentle touch
And hand-spread and clover-nod
Of farewell to all frosted sod
Which count so little, mean so much—
Next see him, his pigwidgeon way,
Tuck a rose-leaf in his lapel
To show a rose-like look at chapel
To beckon Phyllis to look his way—
Till, last, such long years after that,
Scarce knowing what he is looking at,
One rose close-folded in a book,
Like heart in casket, while come to look
And, lo, the tiny flower put there

Moon Fields, or Man the God

Those very many years before,
Nor lip to it now nor honey-store
Nor pink cheek, yet all so fair
And choice to him past all compare
He finds his whole heart folded there.
Best is last, last last is best
Because one harvest of all the rest—
How any day, any leaf will fly
Into rich raiment the hour they die:
So of Natalie, now she was gone,
A new love come to take her place,
The last best love of any race
Of men since any men were born,
To learn how best is just beyond
What makes for gain to them or power
To gain gain, howsoever fond
They grow of their pigging hour;
One best other best is beyond,
Comes last, so clear I see it so
How soul is bound to be it so,
How this poor pot of only youth
I cook in for my love and truth
Cools down, while comes another better
Square in proportion as I lose
The thing I first begun to choose,
And—there 's my truth to the letter!
Keen love of Natalie came first,
Love of the mother next and last,
Yet not in time to be surpassed,
Let Heaven's dominion do its worst—
There she is now left to me now,
Nor tint of cheek, not one slip
Of geranium in her parlor-lip,
Hand shelved against the pure great brow

As if for one fast long sleep—
Yet soul is there to the richest deep.

XXVI

Clacky's turn was next —poor Clacky
Who proved he was both prince and lackey,
As one who serves and will wince
For love of you, at your wink;
Did you once pause ever this to think
How he, of the two, is real prince?
Tame time-worn Clacky—his stoop
Now fetched him round like a barrel-hoop
Inside which gathered xeres and jelly
To give him his big barrel-belly,
So that, take him from head to keel,
He was one wheel within a wheel.
Always he took with him his gaff
He would hook in a tree or cup
Of feldspar to pull him open-up,
Then the one strange end of a laugh,
Like a rustling gown, spring-new style,
Complete chuckle without the smile,
His joy that in any kind of weather
He need not pull himself together!
His turn now to die, poor fellow,
He took two thoughts to him which made
His last task hard, eye-light mellow
As a star when it begins to fade,
His painfullest thought this, 'though I dare
Not swear it was his first for fair,
That he must leave my mother and me
Alone so, in such eternity;

His second, how this life was sweet
So long as he could bibble, eat,
While to leave it and not to know
If juice and jam should play their part
In the new large other after-heart,
Wheresoever his soul might go,
Was such down-come, such cut-under,
Such a kind of quaint God-blunder,
Truth being this, that his pig-hunger
Made of him tripe and melon-monger,
While he, in his last days, so stript
Of what, to tickle his ribs, he had lipt,
Of what he once labored to get enough,
Pigeon-pattie or blubber-puff
To soften his soul, harden his crup,
Straighthen his crooked spine-line up,
He lord pot-knight of the place,
Could do the drinking of his race—
To have to throw up hands, go
To a closet in the blue dead air,
Nor lip to ask, nor skull to know
If puff or pattie waited him there
Was, to all his eye-wide wonder,
Of all that happened above or under,
Just the one God-foolishest blunder.
Well, he did his best—God knows
How a man dies as a spike-rush blows
To die the same way as all the rest,
While one thing just will count a man
In this plying and dying plan,
That he staked his all on it, did his best.
For that, just, there blooms one part
I keep for Clacky in this heart,
One warmest large deep lasting part.

XXVII

One day came which tried to do me
Its worst: one cloud, spotted buff to black,
So rounded as a leopard's back,
Showed mouth to open, lip spumy
Just over me, all as if the thing
Were ready for one giant-spring;
The castle inside grew death-gloomy
As lay my mother there scarce able
To make one short breath comfortable
In the sulphur-mix of air which came
And went about us, hissing gases
Sucked up between mountain-passes
With here or there the lick of flame
To warn us—I and my mother
Alone in the Moon, never another
Live soul, we two so alone,
Just my determined monotone
To make the most of it and the best,
'Though no way clear was manifest
For life to a purpose as men see
One only purpose in life to be
To get more life, get more longing
To long-stretch it, get more belonging,
Counting it all true value to be
World-mighty, not man-mightily
Manned against worlds, against fate, for fate,
Small matter what the end or forfeit.
This leopard-day, latest morning,
Arbalest in arm, I took my path
Up Petavius, sky scorning,
In through yellow aftermath
To see if I could trap a fox

Or crow-shrike between the rocks—
Their life for my life—a man will breathe
A trifle louder, somewhat longer,
Pull his shins up a little stronger
If he get a lintie between his teeth—
Came then, sudden, this new thought:
Claims not all life one right to live?
There I, for my own heart, could not
Take life away which I could not give,
Since each small thing which creeps,
Slaps back, spits, puffs, eats, and sleeps
Is like me, just a soul-size smaller,
I cousin to it and biped crawler .
For more power so I may, at will,
Trample, slash, smash, stick, and kill,
Yet see nor man in it nor love
Nor soul-flight nor spirit-trait
Under the starlights or above
To noble me, to count me great—
So moralled, just so I acted,
So too, as matter of fact, did
What I thought my best to do,
Just the very best I knew
Heart could crave, soul could boast,
And hell could take the hindermost:
Back I brought my empty pouch
That day, and never bird, I vouch.
Mark now how the thing called Right
Runs, in the long run, friend with Might,
As by one law above crown, above curse,
Which surely circles the universe:
Scarce was I come to Griffard gate
Where the clock's hand pointed late
When, far from me overhead and straight

As I could look to the zenith, flew,
By one round flight, my eagle-king
To cut one cleanest perfect ring
For pastime in his lap of blue,
Flung such sweep at it, circled so far,
I thought I saw him lasso a star.
Next instant, by one shoot-up quick
As pickerel plunges in his creek,
Came he to one wonderful poise
Plumb clean over the castle peak,
As cloud will when soft wind buoys,
And, whether on the thing intent
Or by some kind of accident,
Ere I could put me half on guard
He dropped a grouse in our marble yard.
Could it be this way: he knew
How I and my mother grew
To hungerment as each moment flow?
Or was it Clacky who could now
Have put it in the eagle's brow
To feed us—Clacky, who one day learned
Life is hope when chops are churned,
Who now, saints grant it, so had luffed
To somewhere where his ribs were stuffed,
So took compassion on us to tell
The eagle he must feed us well?
Be it either way, plain there was
One of those supremity-laws
Which make for power if there come cause
For performance, transcendant duty,
And man play man for love of Beauty.
There now on her chopper-cot lay
My mother, bedded just inside
Pale curtains where Moonlights hide—

Moon Fields, or Man the God

How I could see it was her last day!
Just at the bed-edge I was sitting
To watch one plum-bush at our window
The mountain wind stripped and thinned so
The branches worked cross-wise, as if knitting,
While there was I too being stripped
Like a falcon, all talons clipped,
To be left there behind to weave
Nothing which I could perceive
Save heartache and hard grieving,
So watched the tiny bush-ends weaving,
Held her, my mother, by each hand,
Knew one next light whisper-sigh,
If drawn, must breathe me her good-bye,
Watched each cheek, saw shoulder-skin
Hug the bone-sides closer in,
As a swallow will, full might,
Clap her wings close to and tight
Just before she takes to flight.
Branch of her young hyssop plant
Took one downward oblique slant
To her pillow, just there to lie,
Much as if wanting, too, to die.
The clock—strange, there was no time
Which looked us, nor use of chime,
Since nought to do was, to think, to see,
All time all the one to me—
The clock was stopping, each hist
Came more muffled—so I missed
The time-tick in her gentle wrist,
My mother's wrist, so tiny small
I could scarce see wrist at all.
Right as I came to thinking on
What must come of me and she gone,

What I could dream at, what I should do
If her fine hand were there no more,
Robin-eye of such buoyant blue
To put me steady, strong as before,
Came there just one slightest cast
Of lip one side, one softest breath
I took to be her solemn last
Sweet welcome to welcomest death,
Begun to speak, each eye broke free
As I have seen two stars look out
Once the cloud is put to rout,
All her whole look meant for me,
Such eye-light out of mighty dawn
To star me and stay me, on and on.
Thought I, I saw such look of rest
Come in her face as now she drew
One paper from its hiding-breast
To hand to me—by which I knew
That was there she could not say
Now death had once begun to play
Between the lips—this only, “The Truth”—
Her last words—’t was all she said—
Drew her last sigh in and was dead.
Oh, what is this lonely power
Of spirit, every hour by hour
To grow, only to lose, the flower,
Unless the whole sweetness of it be
My soul-part which grows for me
Nobler new Beauty I may not see
For blindness to all reality!—
Could real being cease to be,
There could be no eternity
Of Beauty for sign to me—
My blindness, which I call death

In her who only lacks a breath
To talk again, to look less
Than this new wondrous loveliness
I feel at, yet may not know,
The Beauty of it blinding so,
So that, 'twixt me and my sweet friend
There lives one spirit, soul without end,
To which the live creations bend?
So between me and my mother,
One soul between us two, no other,
As so it seems now, for instead
Of her there who so deeply sighed
To leave me, who so looked like dead,
I thought it was myself that died.

XXVIII

Her letter—her last voice,
Like one white wave of breath
To come to me just after death
To heart me to make right choice
'Twixt knocking under to play whipped,
And mounting, spirit-fashion, to down
This bold universe and its frown,
I not to know I had been stripped—
Her letter—all just as it was,
I give it you now, clause for clause:
“When I am gone, after then,
But before you close my eyes
Like lockets to keep your face
Forever in their hiding-place,
Have one look to me again,
Circumspectly, more precise,
Raise the head just, have a care

You smoothe back my white drift of hair—
You 'll find the spring-auburn under there!
Remove, then, each pine-marten mask
Of cheek, nor ever mind the task
Of painstaking to uncrinkle
Each little wholly hand-made wrinkle;
Remove pale pigment, the collar-coat
Which snugs to smuggle my white throat—
Next, having done that much, why then
Have one look to me again
To find how craftily is truth
Concealed, by every way, from youth;
To find, in what remains that is fair
Of her which death thought good to spare,
Enough to show you your Natalie there!
But how could it happen so, you ask;
Why the old cheek, withered mask
For quaint counterfeit to make plain
You should not know Natalie again?
Let me, then, nothing prefatory,
Come straight to the truth of the story:
Your uncle wanted me for wife,
That much you knew at start;
He knew he could not have my heart,
Though on that hazard was staked his life.
Your young love of me he knew,
Knew you were nobler than he, too,
So held advantage through and through;
By fair means he could look to never
Way to compass his end in view,
So thought him of what he counted clever,
One way to baffle and snaffle you:
First he would clap me in the tower,
A task all as easily done

As to command the setting sun
To set and do it on the hour,
Seeing he was chief, could command,
So caught me one day by the hand,
And 'We will go,' he said, 'to see
How things go in the rookery,'
Till, all before I scarce could wink
An eye open to try to think,
He had me there for not a word
More than 'he had caged his bird.'
There that night he left me to see
How I liked traps, gave me taste
Of his kind of supremacy
Before he should risk it to waste
An hour to try to bring me to terms—
Soul yields most, thought he, when it squirms.
One night won me—so the next day
I was quite ready, within reason,
To do what should not prove true treason
To you—he might have his way
And welcome, so the scheme was what
Could compromise my conscience not.
So next day there almightily
He came, as always small men do
With power they are not wonted to,
To talk of himself small-mightily,
Proved the guzzle-pig, lord prelate
Of kickshaw-wisdom, last appellate,
And then—how, by Jove, could a girl
Resist his eye-making, that curl
Of kitten-whisker tied to his chin,
Latch-string to pull at to get in,
Or how under Orpheus could I quell
My liking for the silver bell

His voice had (as when he said,
'You keep the tower till you are dead
Or bow to my Apollo-spell,')
Or how should I escape the snare
Of his speckled tunic, collar-care,
His tapestried paddles debonair
For trapping a maiden unaware?
Senses, but how the wild man talked,
Eyed me, snapped the wolf and balked!—
First, he loved me, I was his dove
Of divine message, which was love—
Then the white lip, scarce he would breathe
For glaring at me not to conceal
His ultra-blazes to let me feel
Most like a dove between his teeth.
Next following came this postulate
Of peace, my one way of freedom
And old joy and new gleedom,
Which I must reckon with for bait:
You must be weaned—come straight to that
For beacon 'one' to be headed at!
For his purposes, in his view,
He had had quite enough of you
For mixing so in his affairs
Of heart, so was it just about
The vertex of his curves and squares
To count himself in, count you out.
So here was his way which he planned
To put me all at his command:
I must play the mother to you,
Mother in every kind of view,
Play my part and play it true,
Or leave my bones there to doze,
Pasture and pastime for the crows!

I once the mother, he knew, he said,
Natalie must count for dead,
Since this much he surely knew,
Your great mother-love in you
Would come first under heaven's blue
So he could put terms to you—you would agree
To think no more of your Natalie
So soon as you should come to see
There was no choice, nor any other
Way for you to clasp the mother.
Such was his *mêlée* of trick and whim
He put my lip to—I, too, no choice
But wear new cheeks, pipe an old voice,
Mother to you, Natalie to him,
Seeing how, by such means, 't was plain
I could be free to take an hour
To drop to you my word or flower,
Hold you near to me again.
Enough said—so, cosmetic-cup,
Paint-brush he took to smutch
My chin to get the wrinkle-touch,
Whiten the red down, white the white up,
Enamel-plaster each new place
About my eyes to rob my face
Of my young look, Natalie-smile,
Chalk my chin, unyouth my brow
The way the very devil knows how
By sorrow-colors of bile and chyle,
Two slaps of mucilage to the task
Of holding the pine-marten mask
Across each shoulder of each cheek
So not an eye could chance to speak,
Till his art-eyed iconoclasy
Came to outrival meloplasty

To grow wrinkles so each yellow fold
Should match his purpose, make me old.
At last you came, and soon I knew
I was under the roof of blue
For freedom to give my soul to you.
Why then, you will want to know,
Did I not speak and have it so?
Were you put once, in your days,
Where, in a case of life and death,
You had no voice, not a bubble's breath,
But all was settled for you by ways
Which soul knows best, you know least
As any stomachy squash-beetle priest,
So you could not perform otherwise
Against the heaven's eternal eyes
Than swallow its verdict of pain and prize?
Well, there you have it—there was I
To flutter between earth and sky
Much as the blunder-butterfly—
This my claim to be forgiven:
I chose yonder spotted heaven,
Which was your love you had for her
Whom you saw never in life before,
Whom I knew you to so prefer
To Natalie, over and overmore,
Seeing I played both parts, so knew
Both loves, could pick between the two.
Do I not know those queen-bee days
We took to humming at citron-time
In and out among the bays
To get an ear to the cattle-chime
Or reed-birds at their whistling rhyme?—
In my field-book, between the leaves
Where life dies while spirit weaves,

You will find my apple-flowers
You brought me once between the showers,
Locked there for one love, which was ours—
Or do I not catch your song
Which struck the hills like an eagle-gong
To fetch my heart up clear and strong
To bell-echo back to you to tell
Through night-watches how all is well?
Then the touch of earth—that sense
Which never once made one pretence
To open a secret, tell one thought
Which was loftily spirit-wrought,
Albeit you said I wore such charms
Of loveliness, wine-eyed swooning,
Cheek to chase cheek, honey-mooning,
Held a whole Happy Land in arms—
Then I came old, contrived to smother
Breath of my youth, wipe off the stain
Passion dabs in each cheek for vain,
Took all sorts of trick and bother
To look pallored, to play my rôle
Of over-sweet gentle mother-soul
Which puts nor praise up nor blame
But love only, always the same
Fine kindness which takes no part
Of life for herself, only for you,
To be that womanful and true
To her shallow cheek, deep-down heart,
As holds men fastened and vastened too—
Then was it there I came to see
What this mother-rôle meant for me:
Once I got the arm of the son
About me I could not once play
One word to bid you take it away,

We two now so completely one
To the white end of what may flower
In mortals in one spirit-hour,
That to have snapped such chain in two
Had broken your idol, mine too,
Since I for mother, you for son,
The reign of true love once begun,
I could see your other love
Was parrotty, so kept an eye out
For fear forever it might die out,
Just passing passion, never enough.
One love blossoms out of earth,
Good for only what it is worth;
The other, such deep lasting other
Love you nourish for the mother
Held in it never claim to worth
For anything to be got from earth,
Never took one look to spy
Amethyst in the morning eye,
To see if spring once left its coat
Of lily-leaf in the underthroat,
Never would have twist or kinkle
Different from each blessèd wrinkle
Which wrote of heartache and care,
Of all her love of you which was there
Forever, and so marvellous fair.
One love leads down to your world
Whose cheek is sunrise, mouth pearled,
Tresses pretty morning-purled
About the eye which shoots desire
So I see back of it the fire
Burns down and out, not up and higher,
While your fine other love ascends
Where soul starts and this world ends,

Neither eye nor lip nor cheek
To win you, nor way to speak
Half the half part there is of it,
So much you cling to it and love it,
The while you may not dream to know
How it beckons to win you so
The while you may not touch nor near it,
Dome-deep dominion of the spirit.
So you loved me when you took
Me for the mother, not the lover,
With not one brilliant lover-look
Nor brow of dreams to float above her,
All things for her, no thought pelfish
Nor little wish a little selfish
Till through it I could clearly see
How love was, how it could be
Beyond purpose, to have no end
In sight aloof and aside
From just the perfect spirit-bride
To selflessness, heart-bonded friend.
Of love I must have the best,
Nor care I how your world thinks
The other way is manifest
Of purpose to link those links
Which go to string the endless chain
Which turns the round world 'round again.
Seeing, as I see, all worst
Means best at last if I seize chance
To trick or conquer circumstance,
So do my most for slake of thirst,
For betterment, or count life curst,
The spirit-last of me comes first.
There is why I kept me the mother
To you, while now that I know

.

How almightily truth is so,
I tell you, now my day is done
And past, and now you find me gone,
There comes no love to us under the sun
Bright Heaven looks down so smiling on."

XXIX

Her letter—there now was why
She rather would take her way to die
And not one word to me nor sign
Of who she was, so she could be
So whole-soulfully wholly mine
As to fill her heart too, she to see
I forgot there was any Natalie.
Love only—not once one thought
Of what was being lost, what not—
Love, the superlative best
Last love, above all the rest,
And I have this high prosperous truth,
The very root of the matter, forsooth:
Think how your mortal best you do
For love of what is highest true
May not one gulden profit you!
Think again how the best that is
In life you fear to lose or miss
May put you wrong, at last, like this:
Scarce comes aught you think to do
In a day's round just to profit you
But it were nobler not to do!
Will I pick my ballad-chat
To pieces just to try his fat;
Spit him through by chop-house art,
If once I hearken to my heart?

Who could bring him once to carve
His fortune by his genius-thought
To see one other brother starve
Who has not the like master forte,
If he will join him, cheek by jole,
Stop to think how, on the whole,
Things are all different in the soul?
There 's age to tell too of such truth:
Age makes another kind of youth,
A new beginning of all other
Than pill-bugs in a pot of bother,
For here is one fact about age:
There it lies on the Finis-page,
Far as gormandy counts at least,
Shows never purpose, looks not before
For handful of power to gather more,
Shuns the old humdrum of drink and feast,
Yet there it goes to the fag-end stitch
Of love which is deep and true and rich,
Like a stream, after dark, will cool and creep
So softly I think it dead asleep,
Yet holds all the stars there, down deep.
What 'though I put me all day long
At music to bell-bellow song
If the key-pitch in it jingle wrong?
Smash your way by shoulder-strife,
Crush to conquer, clap hands to know
How everywhere life lives on life,
Yet who is there lives and loves it so?
Take the round world's tommy stir-muss,
What more is there of soulful purpose
Than the hungry snuffle of a porpoise?
Yet is it life, while men must live,
So they think, to have their day

Like dogs, an hour to tooth and slay
For power to take, nor power to give
The best is theirs, to drop one word
Which after them shall be always heard
For soulfulness and heartfulness and fair,
Chime-song in the sunset air.
Sure is there in man what keeps
Hand uppermost nor drops nor sleeps,
But puts upward, keeps the eye ever
Keen to some new wheresoever
Of other mightiness and loveliness
Than he gets in this Moon-hoveliness,
For mark how now that I have shown
Man has manned himself, has grown
To see in him a new kind of elf
All different from the other self
He knows of, which once he was,
Pipe for the trumpet-blast of wars'
Cruel slaughter for cruel cause
So he should come to fix his jaws
On power, wealth, wallowing
To dream his dream of swallowing,
Since now is seen that there is of him
This new self which comes above him
To outface fashion, to ruin custom,
Get a fairer cassock and lustrum,
For see now how I look to pause,
Startle at what the world once was
Or now is—at what I must do
To live in it, be part of it too:
Take the thing I call success,
Which is life's life, nor more nor less,
I compass by my mightiness,
While to think my brother must part

With most of it, who has not my art
To conquer, will hurt my heart,
To show there 's that in me will rise
King-wing manner just as flies
A blossom's breath toward the skies.
She took her one way to love,
So far from her world and above
As to challenge me to discover
Any love could come above her
For such high-hearted constant lover
As to lay her down and to die
Nor tell me once of how or why
She made her finest choice to lay
Path to my soul by the mother-way
Which saw no gain in it to her
Which men call gain and so prefer,
But love only, such kind of love
As comes to us all over and above
All else, nor cares for any measure
Of life by power, hope, pleasure,
Soul-conscious of what is enough,
The greatness of such selfless love
As never ever will count the cost
Of what is missed in the world or lost.

XXX

From my uncle I learned the Value of Right;
From my Natalie I learned the love of it;
The two together make human Might,
Yet your world gets scarce a snuff of it!
One thing more we Moon-men were taught,
One truth you earth-people never knew,
The Value of Man, how he may be wrought

In all colors, out to red and blue,
By being free to throw his fin
Of orange, of enamel pink,
Take his own way to swim and blink,
Nor try to swallow your azulin,
Play your poltroon altar-kink.
The Value of Man—there 's one trick
Would baffle all arithmetic!
To lop him, make him your like,
Head-end thin as a marline-spike,
Big enough, by dodging self and sin,
For you to mix in your nipperkin
To swallow; next you snuff and smile
Like a bullbeggar, dominie style,
To see him try to stretch and skew
To catch a breath in your ugly spew
Of pickle-trick magic to tell
What narrow shave 'twixt heaven and hell
Is his, and but for you
God knows what his small soul would do—
And there 's your noodle-noddle plan
To split his pluck like an ortolan,
Meek little face-up fearful man!
Moon-men know not such your way
To make a man over, have him do,
Think, slink, wriggle, spit like you,
Seeing, and we 're bound to say,
Man has in him so to grow
More than he could guess to know
Once you give him one whole chance
Himself to conquer circumstance
His way, not yours, his thinking,
Not your stuffy stickleback-blinking,
That he may, shoulders up, full might,

Fetch his own crown-kingdom-height.
Man, to be man, shall be himself,
Neither Ghibelin nor Guelf,
The whole of him, not part of him,
Head and soul and pluck and heart of him
For all he is as God made him,
Nor your black wing to overshadow him.
This much Moon-men knew in their day,
That man, to play color, shall have free play
To strike at random, always his way
If he would fetch his foremost display.
Many-sided, this soul of man,
And angled, on the diamond-plan,
Fireful too, meant to spit forth
One stripe south, another stripe north,
So he may swing him free to dangle
His Nile-blue, his ox-blood spangle,
You not to wear him in your bosom
For fast, like an eye, to look your way
Without a wink, always to play
One color only and that you-some.
You of earth keep your one thinking:
Eye-shut is wiser than eye-winking,
So, not to man-alive, but instead
You drop on all fours to the dead,
And all for this, that they once knew
Enough to do their own thinking through
To the red end, and no thanks to you!
Each man makes himself apart,
Like no other, as one summer's art
Will fork so many pretty leaves
Of lemony toad-flax to a stem,
One cut of armor for all of them,
While, lo, what different pauldrons and greaves!

Man has of him, each one, that what
Strikes higher than one mould of thought,
To wit, his true self, to be brought out
Straight in spite of your hollow flout—
Not always shall men tie to trees,
Mock-bird style, to catch the wheeze
Of Sappho or Simonides.

Man there in your world goes yearning
To learn, not himself, but to learn learning,
Nor thinks ever how, by such his plan,
His learning is only another man
Made manifest for what he was,
More than a copy-croak of daws
Or tidif swung by an origan.

Truth is, your whole planet-schooling
Makes one kind of April-fooling
To decoy men, tempt each astray,
Each from himself to catch a lay
Of one chuckling Aristophanes;
As if first purpose were to please
The soul of Anaxandrides,
Bring him out in place of bringing
You out and your soul of singing!

I do well to see each time
I pull bell-rope which shall chime
Me, not the other one there
Thumbing his own carillon-air.

Not what you thought, not what he taught,
Nor what the whole creation wrought
Makes matters overmost for me,
But what this "soul-self I" shall be,
Do, think, smash, or button into
More than your mere mezzotinto,
After knowing, as I know, I 'm soul

To compass and command the whole
Of purposey power to become
Somewhat other than your drum
You thrash at, whack by whack,
To get your cudgel-music back!
We Moon-men once found way to be
What there is in us soulfully
Or brainfully or each other way
To come above this crust of clay
To make the last royalest most,
Each one his own holy ghost,
To be all what of him to span
His one round dominion plan
Of man the God, which is man the man.

I turned the glass-piece left, so I read:
Nothing is there, since glass is dead,
While the light is born is alive and red.

XXXI

Alone! oh, to be alone!
Stuck like a fly in a globe
Trying, I would think, to probe
New Chameleon or Draco-zone,
For what purpose I 'm left to guess
And make the best of loneliness,
Wits up to me, 'though, to guess
There 's value in just that loneliness!
Oh, to be alone—not in one world only,
But in the galaxy-sweep of worlds
Through which soul grieves and grows and pearls,
And not a voice, no worm that curls,
Nothing that lives, just I only

To look out at the polyglot sky
To outface it and outsoul it and die
The God's death, for the man of me,
No space mighty as the span of me,
I to the rescue of me only
By no Moon-shine Heaven of Hope,
No atom to gain, none to lose,
No death to dodge, no life to cruise,
Save that my power in me will grope
Pilot-like to such vast scope
Of mightier growth, spirit-force
Which, 'spite of worlds, will keep its course
To Beauty, which is truth and might,
To tuck sparks in all kinds of night—
To be alone is to be never lonely,
Be you you, your own self only.
My Natalie-mother—I laid you where
Violets fill to choke with dew
And sweet and sky, like the soul in you—
By the castle-wall I laid you there,
Just underneath our galba-tree
Where I first brought you bryony,
Morning gentianella flowers,
Where you first caught the pæany
Fine flood-throat of a veery
Which shook the air into morning showers
Of song of which you shall never weary
And he drop them to you, o'er and o'er,
Till the mountains be no more!
So was I stripped—such a stripping,
As if all powers against me were bent
On crushing purpose all by ripping
Moon-reality out of me—what meant
Else the laugh in it now I was given

A world to myself without the power
To pluck one sempervivum flower,
Get an after-whiff of it even,
Nor power to take to me nor to ply
An inch of Moon, snapdragon-clad,
To joy me, to half make me glad,
More than a miller may fret his sky?
Am I done then—is that about all
There is of the thing when I am done,
My fly-bobbing in a day's sun,
The upshot of it so poor, so small
As to make my manfulness of soul
Into color, fancy, fire, power,
To reach up like one gillyflower
Only to topple in the end, the whole
Like lichen reaches to sip, then squirms
His low bow to his bench of worms?
Be it so, or be it so
It is not meant for me to know,
Either way, yet I reckon not
What that counts in my bench of thought
And I the very soul which sees,
Moulds and holds what Beauty is
From bell-moth up to pyramis
Of suns—I the soul which trees
Each spark, each cloud-chocolate stripe
To keep them till they fully ripe—
I the man to be awarded
Just my soul and nought beside,
Neither pay nor Whitsuntide,
Not man-mastered nor God-lorded,
But I, just I for what I 'm worth
To conquer this kingdom of an earth
Of soul-shock, which is life and death

And power to beat the mother-breath
Clean out of me as I pant
For purpose to lord it up the slant—
While so what of it more than this,
That I know who the master is
Of me, of my dominion-soul
Which masters to complete the whole
Of what is meant I shall be and do—
My thumb-snap to Peter and Paul and you!
Here now am I in this Moon alone,
All others gone, and she too gone,
Her circum-soular arm withdrawn—
You know how such an arm will leave
Dark only of the empty sleeve—
A world tumbled into my lap
Which I may neither drop nor tap
Nor play with to call my own
'Though lord of it all—nought is yours
If there be in the world no other
Soul you look there to for brother
Whom comparison praises, scores—
There 's no self of me—self is left out
If there be no one else about
In the world for mirror in whom you
Discover yourself by brothering to—
If no self to me, so no selfishness,
Not the tiny ounce of pelfishness,
Seeing all there is is mine,
Yet all not worth one kitten-whine—
I there for mastery to learn this:
Nothing goes in God's universe
Of kingliness which ends in curse,
Nor matters it what the seeming is.
You would think, just to see me now

I stand here on this Moon-beam brow
Without one purpose life could give
Or theme of glory in it now,
That at last is a last end come,
Since now this life of mine has done
Its best for me all under the sun,
Nought now where so much begun,
Yet am I not here as before,
Body less, but spirit more,
One great map of Moon and all
My own, and yet so piping small
There comes to me this: I 've outgrown it
Now I 've come to clutch and own it,
Have grown to this much more to see
How little the gist of it must be
If measured by the soul in me?
There was my life of righteousness,
Your only kind of mighteousness
Which stands alone, needs no God
To pucker to to try to wheedle
Into minding your tom-tweedle
To chassé to your parrot-nod,
But alone just, to make my fight
Against such supreme cosmos-might
As cowed man ever, made him blunder
Into looking up, knuckling under,
Held him to mouth-open wonder
At what he was, at how he was,
Kept him picking for a cause,
While all his long complaining days
Never side-look from him to gaze
To see how one vast universe-plan
Means only to mould the soul of a man.
So, now, having once come to this

That my spirit makes all there is
Worth coming to, next then I see
That to be perfect I shall be free,
Self-dependant, myself wholly,
Not a wink of your melancholy
Beggary or your weak whining
Which brings men to their merest pining
After this or other than just the soul
And soul of them which is the whole
Of Beauty, body moulding it
Like a pot, death unfolding it.
Put me once self-dependant free,
You may put all burden on me
To find me ripe for fighting it,
—Value of wrong comes of righting it—
That way is it the best of me
Blossoms not if the rest of me
Be put under foot, hard held down,
'Though the weight of it be a crown,
More than peach-leaf broads an inch
If prisoned in my finger-pinch.
Made is this world for man
For him to do what most he can
To outgrow it, to come above it,
Wean him to not over-love it,
Seeing my Moon is one rounded egg
I chafe in just to pick and peg
The shell off so to have my run
In dew-grass which sprinkles sun
Of other than the amber-type
Of moss-pink, thistle-stripe,
So soul may flower and tower and ripe.
Make for whatever end you see
To come to for the Heaven in fee,

There 's other nobler yet to be!
Moon-men love God—but there enough
Of worship, their heart of love—
For right there, mark you, they stop,
Nor whisper more to the naked top,
While you court God in his universe
All to take him for better, for worse,
While by so much as you take to you
One thought of him to twist askew
One atom of the man in you
You make of him canker-worm and curse.
Given the whole Hell that could be given
For you to swallow or think of even,
Who would be Jesused into Heaven,
Or Petered out of it, or Pauled
Into power, he greatened and you smalled,
Till just about the consummate all
Left of you is the master—Paul?
So your Templedom (barring just love,
Which makes temple and worship enough,)
Makes for the littlement of man,
Not the largement of him—your trick
To trim him to your closet-plan
Of limits to his bailiwick
To bring him to his meeks and knees
To make him putty-brute just to please
God, all by his shuffling under—
Man made just to gape and wonder
And not know, never to force
His way against worlds, against Gods
By one sublimest Beauty-course
Which circles above odds and sods
Where zenith and zenith shall fall,
And he there master of it all!

Mischance, each hard sorrow-duty,
Day-dark of cuff and buffet,
Make greatness, make love to love it,
Make opportunity which is great,
Make my garden-wall where Beauty
Climbs, 'though climbing sun be late,
Where star-flowers finger to rise
To wheel their sweetness in the skies.
Am I to be downed, I here alone,
Or must I get to my knees to know
What means it, why God made me so,
Never to come to my single throne
Of spiritous purpose, mastrous endeavor
To soul me to that kingdom-height
Which out-riots wrong, out-mighties might
To stand alone, which wins ever,
I for more than bunch of spoons
To dip from your dish, face alabastered
To your cut to be Moon-mastered
So never to be master of Moons?
Here 's plain truth: On the spirit-plan
Man gets to be God by being man,
Not putty-work, nor face of glass
To catch your image as you pass,
As mark now how I once am clear
And clean of what men prize in life,
Gold, power, or hope, or fear
Or any coroneted career
Which follows easiness, dodges strife,
Nought left me out of every whole
Vast Moon-gut save my dominant soul
Which kept pace and beyond, so grew
As all around me stood to fall
Till I could sense it so I knew

How pit-sunk, how lousy small
The gainway is, from bib to pall,
My soul sole sovereign of it all
And more, power to reach beyond
What men count rich in life, hold fond,
To force forward to one other day
Of new smilax, of different sun,
Where soul which is moulded out of clay
May strike out loose to have one run
In Beauty, which man scarce feels,
So much is he crop and jaws and heels.
This I know by seeing how all
I thought once great rounds up so small
As to leave me only this my soul
Which grew, while all around me dwindled
Until it seemed my soul was swindled,
But only as in an air-ship I roll
Away from earth, begin to rise,
Do fields small down as I top the skies.
Power of virtue, forceful duty
Make for power of soul, which is Beauty,
The thing each cosmos marshals fight
To untangle so to bring to light—
I the man of not a master,
Whether God or Devil, to be put
Image-like, stuck in your plaster,
Nor out of sight, nor under foot,
Nor face-up, nor knee-down,
Nor smirk-wise, nor trained to beg,
Parrot tied to your closet-peg,
Nor to little me by your thinking
Gain 's to be gained by any shrinking—
I the man of not a master,
Whether God or Paul or Pastor,

But just my integral master-soul
To strike for Beauty, which is the whole
Of holiness and all conscious power
To widen and sweeten and pinken,
Which nests in the lapel of each flower,
Spirit to spread wing to so rise
As to outmatch worlds, outkingdom skies
By that other Beauty I may not see
Since it now makes the whole of me,
Since now it is the soul of me
I fight for, I now to be free
To splash my streak of beryl-blue,
Never nightshade from you or you,
I to be free and free and free
To soul my soul, to self my soul
Long as the Moons about me bowl,
Or perish the heart and whole of me!—
I the man of not a master,
Since, proof against profit, disaster,
I strike for Beauty nor I care
What else you knick-knack, you that bubble
To balance between joy and trouble—
I strike for Beauty, all that is fair,
For, look about me everywhere,
What else find I save Beauty there,
Beauty to grow by, to grow to,
Beauty deep in the soul of you,
Beauty when a lapwing drew
His curve of fly-green, copper, blue,
As if to rainbow the heart of you
In his sky of the copper fly-green hue—
Beauty when a star plays hide
By dodging just the other side
Of a cloud so to get me looking

To find it in a wider girth
Than circum-bowls this guinea-earth
I tie to for nooks and nooking—
Beauty also when any loss is
To you, when forty foulest crosses
To thwart you multiply, so by might
Of virtue, of pre-eminent Right,
Patience, endurance-power,
You catch the courage of a flower
To ride storms out, to clinch and fight—
Beauty when you know you stand
Alone in the universal land
Of star-space, you just, wholly you,
Not another to knuckle to,
Whether God, man, spink, or gnu,
You there for your unique spirit
And not a master to come near it,
Not a stitch in a chasuble-hem,
But sun-like among suns of sheen
Which fall not since they never lean,
You free as they for one of them—
Beauty when you fear not to live,
Beauty when you fear not to die,
To have not a purpose save to give
The best you have, nor query why
Nor for what reason you live and die
But Beauty, which is the whole of you,
Beauty which is the soul of you,
Beauty which blocks all questions too,
Beauty, neither more nor less,
Beauty its own sole governess,
Whether flesh-pink, fustic, blue,
Not to be once dictated to,
Beauty of right and truth in you

To conquer, to stand you through
To where, by sorrow or hard duty,
By life, if bitter blight or fruity,
You come to the last first best you are,
One single circumsolar star,
Part of all vast eternal Beauty—
So, as I look on the gold blue face
Of sky-fields and all Mooning place
To come to match masters to try
Which is master, they or I,
I look again to my sunstone to see
How soul, like light, will penetrate me
To take shape and color and sweep
Of flight into one unfathomed deep
Of soul-shine, and I put it there
To shapen, and so true and fair
For my shape, my color, not yours,
Neither God-lorded nor Paul-Petered
Nor saint-sanctioned nor creed-metered,
To glisten on new other shores,
I the master who put it there
For my shape, my color, true and fair,
Like a stripe of blue forget-me-not
To linger when the star-fields are forgot.

I turn myself to another view,
I let spirit splinter through,
I get more than pink or blue,
I get soul, which is endless new.

NOT YOUR DOG!

NOT your dog, but mine!
I saw you double-cut him to the quick;
I saw him take your brutal kick
Without a whine.

Then, that look to me!
Those large eyefuls which could not flow
Now he had done his best to show
Some love of thee.

Sorrow, despair!
Till, next, he turned such handsome face to me!
What God's live creatures do not see
What love they share?

Nothing but a hound?
But true as love—gentle, brave, true,
And more the human heart than you
When sought and found.

How he looked to me
To beg me by those eyes to play him friend,
To crush the larger dog to end
Life's wretchedness!

You paid gold for him!
So gold makes master up to top
By titles of an auction-shop,
Pedlar's whim!

Your claim is stuffed and blown!
Your dog is mine for this, we throb as one;
Mine till cowards fail to run
And love has flown.

Now, so, take my word:
With God there goes nor dog nor worm nor man;
Soul is the soul on Nature's plan
In man and bird.

Ever gently then!
Who knows but one day yet may wheel around
When, more than ever you 'll be hound,
And dogs be men?

BROTHERS

Two graves lay low in a swamp-lot spot,
Each traveller passed and noticed them not
Now that the place had been most forgot;
A single slab, which was ages old,
Stood up for the two in a gown of mould,
And the story is this which the tablet told:

Two boys once played in a country field
As you and I in our day have played;
Little was thought of the harvest yield,
Life in the scales had been lightly weighed,
Only a thump and plunge for the ring
Of their wildest shout for the sport of the thing.

The two were brothers—twins at that;
Both kept one way of coming at
The thing they did to the drop of a hat;
Each took the skin-deep kind of bother
Or curlew-leap of joy of the other
To match him, and they were brother and brother.

Years went by till they grew to be men;
The father died of his ripe old age;
Conquering custom was king again
As now they came to their heritage,
Each one to share as the other did,
His half, for so they inherited.

Pastures were few, scarce a farm in all;
 One garret of maize, an ox in stall,
 One orchard to lend a hand in Fall,
 While so it was said, for so men thought,
 The whole of it might have been sold and bought
 For the full of a tinker's guinea-pot.

Next to divide the farm was a trick
 Each one tried and the thing went well;
 Each took a dash at arithmetic
 To show his knowledge of link and ell,
 Till down to a hair and square as a Quaker
 The farm was divided, acre by acre,

Save one deep well at the cedar-swamp lot
 Each wrangled for and neither one got,
 While their hearts grew cold as words blew hot!
 Deep was the well and the spring was clear,
 The prize of it each one counted dear
 Now a contest was on—and the rub was here:

More was the trick than either one knew
 Of how to divide a well in two,
 A claim which only one court could settle:
 Each one should put him to his mettle
 By elbow-force of iron flank
 To find which had the better shank.

Agreed was it so that one should die—
 There was the well for the purpose nigh
 As this plan they drew, nor ever a sigh:
 Both men must clinch to wrestle pell-mell
 Till one threw the other into the well
 And was owner by force of his hero-spell!

Brothers

Sharp at a word they were tooth and heel,
 You could see shots of fire fly out
Of the eyes of each, see them wheel and reel
 To fling each other like bags about,
Now at the hip for a cunning catch,
 Now tooth and claw, while each had his match

To tear the other off from his throat
 Where each made fast by clutches, smote,
Like a wild beast in a pigeon-cote,
 At the pit's edge to try to stumble
His brother over to see him tumble
 Teeth first—two tigers in a jumble,

When, at the well's edge where they struggled
 As giants might have threshed and juggled
For uppermost, little thinking
 Each how his morning star was sinking,
Never a thought of the wrong of it,
 Both tumbled headlong into the pit.

Such a grave they picked, so kind folk came,
 Covered them over with turf and blame
And this tiny slab which has lost the name,
 Only the sorrow-story has kept,
Where many a good heart has knelt and wept
 For brothers who loved so and hated and slept.

There they lie now, poor fellows—God knows
 For what they lie there under the snows,
Lives lost and sunk, now nothing to tell
 What they were, but just this slab at the well
And two small overgrown sunken sods—
 Yet they were brothers, and men are Gods!

MAN OR SPIDER ?

I

THERE 's a spider strikes his beak!
One blow of his jaw-rammer,
Of his claw-hammer,
Means death to the weak!
Just you watch him slink,
Beat tracks to his hole,
Stopping not to think,
Showing never a soul,
Dodges in and out,
Venom in his pout,
Poison in his snout!

Take him at his best
In his gun-barrel nest,
Targets to a dot
And he whistles free
As a rifle-shot
To let slip his sting
For demony
To split the wing
Of a silver fly
Dancing to sing,
Dancing to die.

Man or Spider ?

Mind his web of glass
In pink and green
Like a cuirass
In copper sheen
Of a morning hour
For his spread of power,
One wave of violet
In buff and jet,
Or pale at evening spread
For a shroud instead
To cover his dead!

What a master-stroke
For a way to kill!
What a hand to choke
In the throat and gill
For a life to crush
Into lasting hush
For blood to spill!
Deceit and theft,
Spy-bite and sting,
And nothing is left
Of the sorrel wing!

I saw him lie
At his hole one day
Like a cannon-spy,
Like a sword at play,
Stab the Y-wing moth
In his velvet cloth,
Saw him duck to watch
From his pistol-notch
Just to feast his eye,
Watch the Y-moth die,
Drink his sigh.

See, he hangs his net
 For the sun to touch
 Where the dew has set
 And the morning such
 As to drop each stripe
 Of geranium ripe
 In his cunning gripe,
 Or star-balls in blue
 Out of fire of dew,
 His heavenly type
 Of a trap for you!

Is there good in him,
 A thought to care
 For life or limb
 Of a fly in air?
 Is there soul to feel
 How each hellish thrust
 Of his poison heel
 Is a step unjust,
 Is a crime to tell,
 A sepulchre-spell,
 A leap of hell?

II

A girl once waited in your garden-plot—
 You know how she loved you all her soul
 To keep you for her only thought,
 Her avatar and the whole
 Trophy of her heart each day,
 As true women do their way,
 Which you know and I say!

Man or Spider ?

Her kind pale face how it looked for you
By one bunch of sweet-rocket just as white,
Not one look of her but was true
As stars prick through the blotted light,
While there she stood watching for you,
For her one man strong and true,
As sweet women do.

And yet her spirit has told her what,
A thing you thought she never could know,
Something wrong in you she half thought—
But she would not think, since she loved you so,
Which is why she was pale that day
Her sweet trusting anxious way,
Like a fawn at bay.

Her locket coddled your face inside,
The which she kept in her inside breast;
Your knot of oxeye, moon-color dyed,
She kept because you liked it best,
But over and above them all
She harked for your footstep fall,
Your confident call.

And what have you now to say to you
Who brought her to pain of heart and mind
Just for your whim of a day or two,
And you intended to leave her behind
To sorrow, as she would do,
And you knew it too,
For love of you?

There was that last evening you saw
She trusted you as you told her how
She was all you were living for,
And you gave her your solemn-knotted vow

Of vast allegiance and love
 By the sweet Heaven above
 For solemn enough.

You came again one elegant day,
 Brought her your spike of dragon flowers
 To speak for you with their mouth of May
 As there you played with her heart for hours!
 As a hawk at a linnet dips
 You hovered close at the tips
 Of her coral lips

As close by her yucca flowers she stood,
 Their twenty swords drawn as if to say:
 We are not here to be tricked and shooed,
 Hands off, or you end your day!
 How could you steel you to take
 Her lips and leave the ache
 Your kiss would wake?

Another afternoon, just ago,
 She stooped to pick, where she saw you pass,
 Ground-flowers made of mock-orange glow
 Because your shadow touched them in the grass;
 Was it that she half way knew
 Your shadow was the true
 Best part of you?

Not so! She would not let herself think
 You were aught else than her perfect man,
 As if truth were meant to choke and sink
 Ere love shall climb his meridian!
 How she trusted you from start,
 How she bore the smart,
 Wasted her heart!

Man or Spider?

At last in her time she paled away—
 You came not again to take her hand,
So she went alone to her higher day,
 Her new other pale perfecter land,
Never one thought once but of you
 She tied such sweet longing to
To her last day true.

Give a moment my way, if you will:
 Under this cypress have one look
At one little garden-plot hill!
 See her steps she left, see her way she took
Where she waits among her flowers for you
 Just as she used to do,
Just the same way true!

KNOW THY HORSE

THIS time was winter—the road begun to sing
Like a Stradivarius now a sleigh
Drew bow without the fingering—
Men would wince and pinch and pray
For summer—you know the way!

Farmer Bosom and his wife took reckoning
How they should have not an inch of use
For Strutty, while just wintering
A horse was waste—better choose
To sell him than keep and lose.

Such fine kind horse was Strutty, small doubt of that,
Had done round service, too, in his day,
A point they pricked and halted at,
Yet scarce could they feel a way
To keep him—no work, no pay!

So next day, now the thing was settled, "What say,"
Said Bosom, "if we write a notice
To put his color proper bay,
To tell how fine his coat is,
His temper, for just so 't is?"

Not so freely—neither Bosom nor his wife
Had shouldered pen in either hand
To scratch a thought in half a life,
Scarcely now could understand
How to take a pen in hand.

Know Thy Horse

Prime Rastus, he was one clever one, 't was said,
Village auctioneer, could read and write—
Why not try him, hire his head
To do the shining bright,
Put Strutty in a proper light?

Prime Rastus, so, was summoned to take a hand,
Put ink to purpose, let the world know
What a horse was Strutty, how prime grand,
How he would snort and polish so,
How like splinters he could go.

Here, then, I give it you, word for word, my word
As just he wrote it for not a jot
But Strutty's fine points must have spurred
To praises so overwrought—
Truth or no truth mattered not:

Vide !

A horse
For selling
For better
Or worse
To the letter
This day—
No telling
All I
Have to say
Of his eye,
Of his face,
Of his play
And place
Among stars,
Of his run

Between bars
Like the sun
About Mars—
Zounds, for a horse
What a horse!
What for fins
At his feet,
What for shins
That are fleet—
What for power
To cut loose
For an hour
Like a moose—
Proper kind;
A new tail
On behind,
Goes, of course,
At the sale
With the horse—
Mark the bow
Of his neck,
Mark the glow
Not a rein
Could restrain
Nor a check—
Driven
By men,
Given
By men
To know
When to stop,
When to go,
How to prop,
How to show,

Know Thy Horse

So now
And you meet
A new lass
In the street
He will bow,
He will stop
Ere he pass—
And you take
Her to ride
He will walk
For your sake,
And, beside,
He will balk
To start slow
As thought
Out of dough—
All a steed
For all need,
All agreed
He 's a mood
That he could,
If he would,
Write and read—
All the brain
Of a man
On your sky-
Lighted plan
To succeed—
So to buy
To win is,
And suffice
It to say
That the price
You 're to pay,

Forty guineas,
Would not slate
Half the rate
Of his pate,
Of his gait!!!

Now Prime Rastus builded better than he knew,
Since Bosom and his wife, taking heed
How what he wrote was "certain true,"
How Strutty was much indeed,
Lofty toppy, noble breed,

Came to conclusion, the more of it they read,
If Strutty were such a horse as now
They knew from what Prime Rastus said,
To keep him—so took a vow
Not to sell him anyhow!

LEO AND ELFINELLA

SAYS Leo, I have my lick at life;
There are my cottage and pretty wife
And trinkets to pay for my day of strife.

The world I take as it comes!
Each keen wind that troubles and drums
I whip into gold by my soul of thumbs.

I pluck the juice of the stars,
To find life only one painted farce,
So what of this withered hide of scars?

What if I die in a day,
And they have taken my world away,
I 've had my lick at it, play and say!

What if I never know
Whether the truth be this or no
That life means only a touch and go,

So that I feast an hour,
Play honey-fly in mountain bower
To get my share of the world in flower

To pack my gut, flutter,
Noise abroad by my conch of clutter,
Content to bubble above my gutter,

So that I get my fling,
 So that I let the cymbals ring,
 So I make merry and most of the thing?

ELFINELLA

Another day is in branch,
 My day too,
 Another day to redden and blanche
 And polish blue,
 A day for me as well as for you.

Not born am I, and as yet
 I am not
 What you may coddle or man may get
 Or men have sought
 More than the elfin they know of not.

I am to get my life,
 Like as you,
 Get my feast of sun and crop of strife
 To be, to do,
 To come to power by the God's way too.

Yet am I to be born,
 As were you,
 To take up my pathway on and on
 Your blood-life through
 To grow my spirit and mould it too

To nobler purpose beyond
 What I find
 Where you are put in training and bond
 To widen to more spirit and mind
 Than your pot-bush world you leave behind.

Leo and Elfinella

Once on a time we met,
 I and you,
So we are not to forever forget,
 For soul is eternal and therefore true,
And we shall be one yet, I and you.

You have forgotten me,
 And because
You in your world forget to see
 What went before you that ever was,
You that are smothered in rump and jaws.

Together were we ago,
 You and I;
We loved and promised and tried to know
 If love meant only to pass us by,
If life meant only to squint and die.

You had your way of thought,
 Which was this,
That life is only gut to be got,
 Struggle only a thing to miss,
And death an end with an emphasis.

You thought to make most
 Of the thing
By making a point of rabbit-roast
 And fribble or mouthy muttering
Against truth, against power of soul
To compass lastly the lasting whole.

I took another thought,
 Which was this,
That life is more than life to be got—
 More than the life that is
Is soul, and the only emphasis.

So were we parted then
 In that time
 Of another world of different men,
 Men meant to climb
 To what is evermore more sublime.

That way I lost you then,
 That you see!
 Yet what is lost shall be found again
 In eternity,
 All place in place for you and me.

So shall you struggle on,
 This I know,
 While I, too, am to be corporate-born
 To take the likewise-way you go
 To grow me greater some way, so

I may yet come to you,
 Like as you
 May come to me by the same way too
 Of Beautifulness which is Power
 Beyond toe-reach or potato-flower.

Not all in one life is done;
 More is for me
 Than chinch or plum-life under the sun;
 More upon more is to be
 Since I hold a universe in fee.

LEO

You, so, are not yet born
 Whom I seek for to dote upon,
 And may not be before I am gone!

ELFINELLA.

'Round in the worlds of space,
 / You may know,
Abundance there is of time and place
 For men to be born again and go
And be born again forever so.

LEO

Ah, but to what end
 Do I knit together and unbend
 And gain my purpose and lose my friend?

ELFINELLA

Beauty is lastly truth
 To each dot,
Is beyond the pink lax lip of youth,
 And that, too, whether or not
I look to youth for each Beauty spot.

So is the thing I seek
 Not what I grew,
Chalk in an alabaster cheek,
 Eyes of hyacinthine blue,
But Beauty which comes of being true.

I shall be born again
 Into mind,
Not to capture the gains of men
 They plough to and leave heart behind,
But Beauty which comes of being kind.

Your world I shall come to know,
 Right and wrong,

Not for the feast of it or show
 Of goldflower or silver song,
 But Beauty which comes of being strong.

Worlds are many, while so,
 You shall see,
 I and you are to come and go
 Many rough ways of eternity
 Ere I reach to you and you reach to me.

LEO

Close draws my day to an end!
 If I am ever to have you, my friend
 I love so, small matter what toil to that end.

True, in my life I have done
 Most my worst as the foot-fields run,
 So I 'm to finish where I begun.

Yet is my love of you
 Come to last as the days stay blue,
 And I 'm to begin life over new.

What if that hour you are born
 Shall find me withered, or past and gone,
 There are you always to follow on!

Love could not breathe to cheat,
 All things are bound to be complete,
 Nothing is broken or obsolete.

Now do I see you clear
 Out in your finer atmosphere
 Than blues or yellows an atom here.

There are you now in keep
Of a new cloud and livelier sweep
Of leven than any brain could reap!

About you your new light speaks
Of power beyond the pigment of cheeks,
And not a pottle of moonlight leaks.

About you comes each new form
More perfect than what it parted from,
As worlds float out of their melted storm.

About you the new throat rings,
Tambourine-birds in unspeakable wings,
And Beauty is just the spirit of things.

Why shall you seek to come
To earth again where hearts are numb
Till men would cudgel each other dumb?

ELFINELLA

I am the spirit of the wind!
Once it was
I played at loss, for I tricked and sinned
In that I tried to unmaster laws
To dodge each effort of kinging cause,

So now am I dropped behind
To try again,
Take my new turn of body and mind
To come to power out of joy and pain
Above any world or its way of gain.

First, there 's to learn to love
 What is true
 For love of it, just love is enough,
 Never for any profit to you,
 As I shall learn to love to be true.

There are ways to be great
 I shall take,
 Such as wrong I strike to subjugate,
 And I put this breath of life at stake
 For Truth and the good I think and make.

So is my way of life
 Through an earth
 Conquest by way of mammoth strife
 By which I come to vaster worth
 Of purpose, come to nobler birth.

For you the like life too,
 You to go
 To what is beautifulest true
 And mighty, as the Gemini show
 Magnitude by their sweep of glow.

Be you in your world,
 I in mine,
 Be we this way or that way hurled,
 One unique purpose is twice divine,
 I to be yours yet, you to be mine.

Many worlds, many lives
 To and fro,
 While everything dies and survives
 As men come and go,
 And I am more than the thing I know.

Leo and Elfinella

Once were we forced asunder,
 I and you,
By just our one pitiless blunder!
 There 's only to be and do,
And no escape for me or you

But to perform one part
 Down to death,
Nobility of soul and heart,
 Such Beautifulness as draws a breath
Beyond what reason reasoneth.

Here is a new pure light
 Encircles me,
Bridles and baffles so my sight
 I have no power in me to see,
Such is the power of purity!

A new music is about,
 So rare and free
As to put all harmony to rout,
 As beckons, yet so puzzles me
That am not shapen to get the glee

In such prelude. My other sun,
 Beyond sky
I know could never have been begun,
 Never was ordained to die
Or flourish nothing, more than I.

I find me out of place,
 Much as a brill,
Once out of water, coils at space,
 Snatches to try to get his fill
Of the wanton air, and then is still.

LEO.

You are out of life, the while
 I am in it to sorrow and smile
 And gain by an inch and miss by a mile.

ELFINELLA

You are in it to make most
 Of such power
 As comes of breathless immortal ghost
 I see hiding behind an hour
 To ripen in any hazel-flower.

You are in it to make hold
 Of such power
 To play the man to an outer cold,
 Nor count the sweet of it or sour,
 So you come to your kingdom—Power.

All men are immortal,
 Yet not all
 Stand equi-great, equi-small,
 But one is under, another is tall
 As moonlight, another is kneeling doll.

For each is time in store,
 Each to snatch
 His turn at the wheel, and more and more
 Of sublimity to catch
 For love of it and to match his match.

Pretty ways are these
 Through the sky

Our worlds take, eagles in a breeze—
 They know only their way to fly
Uppermost always where thought is high—

Your way to me, mine to you,
 Nor counts this space
Or time for anything which is true
 Of spirit or the hiding-place
Of Beauty which looks without a face.

Love lasts—'t is a trick
 Of soul,
Finer than any prairie-quick,
 Vaster than what puts the roll
Of planets to their plump control.

I last, you last to change
 Into shape
Of other more majestic range
 Of purpose than calculating ape
Proud of his flounce and knotted nape.

Since we are meant to last
 Above weather,
Since love is not a thing of the past
 To perish as a nub of heather,
Truly one day we shall come together.

By what world, what life, what way
 We may meet
Goes not for me in my hour to say,
 Save that this thought of mine is sweet,
That the soul of things is at last complete.

Death gives a new kind of thought,
For it saith:
"I am what I appear to be not,
I am life the while, while Death
Is only the new other brilliant breath."

THINKING OF EUNICE

I

SQUASH-FLOWER is in blow,
Hops are in bell,
Blackthorn promises sloe,
King-fly is in his cotton cell
When I take my way across meadow
In between oak and apple-shadow
To where Eunice is, just over the hill—
I shall find her there at her window-sill!

First through the woods I go;
Comes then the long hill-top;
Floats the factory-pond below;
Beyond stands the stocking-shop,
While next in one small side-hill
Her cottage is—how well I know
She will be there at her window-sill
Among her flowers and of them so!

Here am I at the pond;
This is her slight canoe;
We were there beyond,
Just the other day too,
To pull those lilies in long grass,
Watch the ox-eyed heaven pass,
Get a whiff of this generous air
Bringing us sweetness from everywhere.

Now am I at her gate;
 Here lies her gravel path;
Here, too, I hesitate
 For the fineness which it hath,
So like her—do I fear
 May be she may not be here,
Or do I stop at a thought to stir
 For so much pleasure at finding her?

This is her cider-tree;
 She set it out in June;
Hark what rounded melody
 Drops from her new festoon
Of grape where it hangs between
 Peach-bush and window-screen
Now the hornblower trumpets such sweetness
 Life looks blossom and all completeness!

Yonder her settle of oak!
 It seems but a day ago
Her mellow bluestart broke
 Into such rapture so
Under the moon where we sat
 To listen to his chime and chat,
We forgot, between moon and campion
 And song-shout, that any night was on.

This is her plot of holly-rose;
 Once she pulled the flower for me:
“So life comes and goes,
 But Beauty stays unendingly,”
She said, and gave me the flower,
 Much as to say, Beauty is Power,
Nothing of it is dropped by the way,
 Soul is Beauty and come to stay.

Thinking of Eunice

How I remember one night!
Each star was hung in view
Up in no end of height,
Down in the mill-pond too
To say: Only shadow is there
In your shallow world, nor inch to spare;
Only up here in eternal far
You discover your real star.

What thought was ours, who shall say?
We would watch shadows skip,
Leaves slap each other, then lip to lip
Almost in our human way!
We were that cheek to cheek
As lily-pad and lily-creek;
We were that much wholly one
As yonder solid single sun.

“Could you put me away
Out of your thought an hour
As moonbeams play
With this clary flower?
Moonbeams pretend to be the sun,
Bear his light and gonfalon
Only to give warm looks, the same
As this feverfew—there springs no flame?”—

She would ask. All her trust
Was mine in spite of doubt;
Love rules because it must,
Drives each cavilment out.
I was come just to show her plain
Love has only love to gain,
Which she could so perfectly understand
Now I held her heart and her pretty hand.

Ripe inula stood in place
And yellow and just as bright
As the moon's new yellow face
Which kept us so in sight
I reached and I got the flower there,
Tucked it her way in her gentle hair
Just between temple and brow—
I wonder if she keeps it now!

This is her cottage-door;
How her lattice-vine is grown
So large as never before;
How her orange-bush has blown
So it lops the path in two
As if to say I shall not go through,
And I hark, and her shrike is still—
She is not there at her window-sill!

Grasses shoot up between
The chinks in her garden-walk;
Gone is her garden's elegant mien,
Pea-tree and its pretty balk;
Gone is the ring of the whippoorwill—
She is no more at her window-sill!
Among her flowers there waits for me
Only the spot where she used to be.

II

Something in life I miss
As the fine days come and go;
Something in life there is
Follows close to me so

Thinking of Eunice

I look while I know I see
 Life means never loss to me,
But more to me than I am,
 And nothing is shuck just, or tricky sham.

Down in my heart I keep
 The very thing I miss!
There 's a thought to reap
 To wonder what it is
Which I have which I have not!
 Is there more of life to be got
Than soul which is true and free
 And full of the genuineness of me?

My Eunice is gone away,
 So many years ago,
While I am back this day
 To where her papilio
Ducked in primrose, where her pipit
 Hugged his song, would not lip it
Nor give up a note of it until
 She stood there at her window-sill.

So fast in my soul she is,
 Yet is she gone away!
What is it, then, which I miss
 This very sun-above day
I had her here years ago
 Among her doves and cinnamon-show?
What is it now which I miss
 If I have her so in my heart like this?

Is it her tiny hand?
 What were that one whit more

Than this Tyrolese band
At her throat she wore
And I have now? She gave it me
For something I could touch and see
Which was hers—there too was her hand
I could touch and see— you understand!

This was her paper fan
Which wrinkles and has a breath
And a certain span
And a certain death;
Baffles the same wind too
She baffled and blew and drew—
A palm and fingers and pitapat!
What counts the small hand more than that?

This is her lily-patch,
White lilies on a stem
Which only her hand could match,
Could match the best of them,
Could open the same way wide,
Show the same red heart inside,
So she gave me her hand this hour
I hold its image—her mountain flower!

Why shall I think her gone
Because I do not see
Her step across this lawn,
Her hand in her white guava tree?
Have I no more to follow in her
Than foot-flight or muckender?
Or do I not have her by me near
Now her spring and her birds are here?

Thinking of Eunice

There in her seckel tree
Her veery fines his song
To lift it high for me
As heaven from his topmost-prong,
Her song which he caught from her
Right as April began to stir;
And now a new April is in ken,
Lo, her voice—I have it again!

This her apricot-bush
Keeps the grace of her play
And her pretty hush
And her toss and sway
Of elegance to the purple top
She gave it by her scallop and chop,
While there and just out of reach
Is her pink in the cheek of the peach.

Yonder the fine clean sky
Made of such perfect blue
And I have her heavenward eye
To look to me deep and so true
As one round blue vault of lofty skies
Planted its image in her eyes,
Her look of the planeted sky,
True always and ever most high.

So I have her this far,
So I keep her in sight
As I get the pink of a star
Clean through my prop of night,
For here are her cheek and ivory hand
Each year in her japonica land,
So comes it that I have her still
'Though she be no more at her window-sill.

See, I pick this flower,
 I hide it in my breast away;
Each moon that passes and each hour
 Give it just that much more to say
To clinch this truth: Nothing is
 My best which I was meant to miss—
'T is so I clasp her, I have her still,
 'Though she be no more at her window-sill!

TO A STREET MINSTREL

AHOY

To our tambourine-boy
Of the street!
Ahoy to his click,
To the trick
Of his feet,
To the sweep of his head
For a chance
To win his bread
By the spank of the dance!
Ahoy to him there where he leaps
In his street-rubbish heaps!

All 's well
In his mix of pell-mell!
Look you too
To the big soul-size
Of his eyes
Through and blue!
Here 's a luck to his art
For a way
He flings his heart
In his tambourine-play,
His soul through his chirrup of song—
All health to his gong!

Hoorah
 To my cobble-stone star
 In his rags!
 Hoorah to his clink
 At the brink
 Of the flags,
 To his castanet-song
 To a pitch
 And the note is strong
 As the soul is rich—
 Long luck to his jacket of shags,
 Star-spangled rags!

All hail
 To the face thin and pale!
 Have a care
 Of the small white hand
 Of command
 Which is there,
 Of his tunic of holes
 And his luck
 To capture souls
 By his mountain of pluck
 Which wins and has spirit to spare—
 God's luck to him there!

Hark sharp
 To each spring of his harp!
 Clap an ear
 To the symphan-phase
 Of his lays
 True and clear
 As they ripen to rob,

To a Street Minstrel

By a note,
The storm of its mob
Like a robin's throat—
To my curbstone king of the year
On his chorus-career!

Look there
To his bundle of care
Which is part
Of his soul and hand
By command
Of his heart
Not to quit nor to flinch
By a breath,
Nor yield an inch
To the snarling of death
Where he drums and masters his art
And bugles his heart!

To-night
He is plain in your sight;
To-morrow
He 's back in the earth
Of his birth
And your sorrow,
To shout no more ahoy
To his June,
Nor jump for joy
To his street-corner tune;
Look you alive—who shall borrow
Breath of to-morrow?

Look alive,
'T is divinest to strive!

To a Street Minstrel

697

Look again
How his star will shine
For divine
Among men!
To his tambourine-bells
And they ring
How life foretells
He is born to be king
By his bell and wing, like the wren,
High lines above men!

DON DUN

BONNYCLABBER glum-sighted Don Dun
Was his cut,
Was his name he had, so that but
For the little he had done
Since his breath begun,
I might have thought him wisdom-freighted,
Talent-pated

To mark him waddle up his street,
Heel and toe,
Like as if God made him so
The gist of him should be feet,
He to stump and reel about,
Fling his ultra superb pout
The town about.

Don Dun, for need of soul, married;
I would say
Better of him had he tarried
To let one good woman take her way
And time to choose another,
Get her the one lord-hearted brother
One lucky day.

Knew he better, did Don Dun,
Had his whim

There was not good enough for him
In petticoat under the sun—
Was he not Don Dun?
Was there the i-dot more to be said
From A to Zed?

To himself he could be good, this Dun!
She, the wife,
Should help him coddle his value-life,
They two to be one,
Whilst that one, be it understood,
Should be Dun-royal, only Dun,
All for her good!

Made are women to be trained,
So he said;
Are all heart, little head,
While men go monsterly brained
To vast purpose, to bring good
Out of evil—that he could,
That he would.

Now, then, to trim her,
See her wince,
Teach her putty-lip, he for Prince
To hold her to her primer,
She to learn his kingful mood,
Knuckle under, sneeze subdued,
All for her good.

His way, just his way, was right;
That he knew
By the owl in him and cockatoo
And doubtlessness of a cenobite,

Don Dun

Since God made him to rule her,
To quash, rob, please, and fool her
Like a schooler.

She must poke the meek ankle-gait,
Learn to stalk
Sidewise, just the nobody-walk
To put him, by contrast, great—
Were they not both together one,
One mightiness under the sun,
Which was Dun?

What mattered it how she thought,
So he knew
The speck part of a thing or two,
Knew this was that, that was not?
Was he not tuned to squeak
For edification of the weak
From chop to cheek?

So was it at last he had her,
By such trick,
Meek as rung-rods in a ladder,
Self-thoughted as his walking-stick
To take him softly by the hand,
To harken leaf-like to his command,
Look happy-bland.

Now comes the tug—now came a day
In his life
He needed the proof-perfect wife
For what she could do or say
To nerve him to fight his cause,
Perchance to save him from mighty loss,
Lighten his cross.

Looked he for her there and then,
 Now he was weak
In his mastiff-clinch among men,
Bade her not sigh to him, but speak,
Play woman, be his bower,
Muster soul for him and power
 That same hour,

Nor saw how this truth is grown:
 Man shall reap
Only what he has sown;
Even the wife of his bosom-keep
Was just as he arrayed her,
Stopped where he stayed her,
 Small as he made her!

What more is for her to do
 Or be
Than just what he once moulded her to?
Look to see if you can see
How, among all lofty things,
A chat may soar if you choke his glee,
 Chop his wings!

POLLY MAN AND FOLLY GIRL

SNUB-EYE, that 's snob-eye,
The weevil-walk in white pants,
Any color-colored dye
To paint his vest of circumstance
So men should haul up, right about nose
With: There 's the Mighty, there he goes!

Did his shirt-front look too white,
'T was his Pollux-look of light!
Did he part his hair in twain,
He found his true meridian!
No end of polish, shoe and shoe,
Only to outglisten you!

Spit-bug—such an artistic spit;
Hopper-dog—the Prince's hop
He copied, and the joke of it,
He got going and could n't stop,
While take him in his tints and squints
And men would say—There goes the Prince!

Two hours at his table-glass
He will let the ribbons play
Between his fingers just to class
The knot he ties with what they say
Was Duckington's the night he toed
His great cotillon—how he glowed

In velure, half tin-tinted,
 Clapped a window to one eye
 Through which he snapped and squinted
 Just to mount to majesty
 Of cold look—so the cold soul has
 Its match and fellow—glass to glass!

Ball Night now is on;
 He shall make his trotters show
 How like feathers they can go
 Now there 's kicking to be done,
 Fan-flaps in the dancing air
 All to pin his prettiness there.

Miladyness the opposite side
 Ducks her face behind her fan
 Like the linnet tries to hide
 Once she sees her rifleman
 Taking aim—there goes the shot
 And she must dodge to save her lot!

Next is the lofty dance,
 Duckington's cotillon next,
 Such augmented circumstance
 There is ample-full pretext
 To ask her to skirt the dance
 With him in his omnipotence.

Take him for the collar-lop,
 Twenty buttons made of gold,
 Pasted hair, and such a crop
 Of colors if he caprioled,
 And how should a wise girl miss
 Such sweep of monarchy as was his?

Polly Man and Folly Girl

Milady—she will like to see
 How the floor below her slips,
To reach to such sublimity
 As glistens at his finger-tips
Only to join his caracole
 To see the pinwheel in his soul!

So she yields, breath-expectant,
 He lord pompous and amplectant
The while they swing and swish
 Elbow-bowed and willowish
About the lamps, like as the moth
 Bobbles in his cedar cloth.

She is thinking of her fan:
 Might it open for a wing
To lift her into flickering
 Above her yellow-button man
Where she could perch away
 Out of reach of his puppy-play!

He is thinking of her for wife;
 He is sure to tell her so;
He has need of her for life,
 Never mind the why or no!
She will suit his table-style,
 Furnish him with plump and smile

Such as youngness in the cheek—
 She for somewhat he may take
To nibble, like an Easter cake,
 And so he takes his chance to speak,
To talk to her of life and love
 And all his pretty other stuff.

But hark—there 's the linnet's voice!
 Look too—there 's the linnet's eye
 Sighted to make her perfect choice,
 Levelled to see the reason why,
 All as her moon-flower would have done
 To dodge the cloud, to lodge the sun.

"True," she said, "you know to dance,
 Eagle's wings to you for feet,
 You have button-circumstance,
 Have collar—your claim complete!
 What for such back of elegant prop,
 All the duds of a custom-shop!

"Look you do by an eye of glass,
 Spirit such as the window has;
 Tied is your throat to a golden string
 As if your bow-knot tied a king;
 What for whiskering and the rest!
 What map of majesty in a vest!

"Say me one thing you have done
 More than take your bite of sun
 Or snooze in your daily shade,
 Pick your lick of marmalade,
 Run your two eyes through a gem,
 Show your teeth for diadem!

"Yet you are, as the world says, nice,
 Wear beautiful hands, you have eyes
 Bright as a Bird of Paradise,
 Beside which, over and above,
 I know how soldierly you could love—
 There 's this life to the point enough!

“So let us up to the dance,
Nor thought of this purpose-world
Of soul or sober circumstance,
Enough if we be jounced and whirled
Into joy—there ’s a thing to do—
So on with the dance—I ’ll marry you!”

CAMPO SANTO

LAY me in some lavender spot
After I am gone;
My bush-chat will forget me not,
He will dance about his lawn
To try to have me hear him again
When he makes his hop and run
Under the sun,
When he tumbles his great refrain
In the tumbling rain.

Put me by my purple river
Where I drank
Among the bubbles, where crowfoots quiver
On the bank,
That I may lie forevermore
Where I lay before,
Boy there on the laughing shore,
That I may lie there like my river
Which is gone, yet is there forever.

Did you once think I am not to hear
After that,
Nevermore to get the clear
Ripe tri-rune of my chat,
Know never what is going on

Campo Santo

Across my lawn,
Stoop not once more to pluck
Tree-moss, strike for luck
At life again because I am struck?

Am I to be downed
By any rising sun?
Am I no nobler than this ground
To lie there, to keep to one run
About the sun,
And this my spirit but just begun
To be more than I can see,
Never the mock of eternity,
All things but only part of me?

Look you to this chrysoprase
I have in hand
Only for the power it has
To throw one band
Of duck-wing or prairie-green
Across my screen
So the true colors may be seen
To be no part of my gem
Which only moulded and golded them!

Shall not my spirit take shape
From rib and nape,
Learn of the whisper of my sigh
How to long, how to fly,
Take wing on the last low breath
Beyond any death,
Quite as the dog-star flings his stripe
Of citron of eternal type
Beyond all clouds the eagles wipe?

Put me by my hornbeam tree
 With its wings
 Which will dip the dew to me
 Right as the wood-lark sings
 Under his kingdom of the moon
 Between these arabis flowers of June
 To see how I will be there
 To claim my share
 With all my love of the narded air.

Lay me among the grasses
 When moonlight passes
 Just where the chinkapin props
 Its thistle-finch through the dark
 While he flutes and stops
 And I will hark
 In my corner of his park.
 Count I not for more worth
 Than conquests of an earth?

Grow a flower or two for me
 Below my belamy tree;
 I will come to see,
 Will hover there to gaze
 As in other days,
 To put such value on your thought
 Which forgot me not—
 Be so sure I shall see
 You only grew them there for me.

Lay me among cassidony
 And hops and honey
 And briony
 And peony

Campo Santo

Where they climb and thrive—
Is not everything alive?
Could anything be dead
In no underneath and no overhead
And no end of things to be thought of or said?

Bring no ululu,
Nor bring any thought that I am gone:
Soul shall be true to you,
Shall let you pass on and on
For having led you to think
There 's no collapse nor pit-hole brink
Where no underneath is, no overhead,
And so no stopping-place for the dead
When the truth of things is heralded.

Out of another land
I shall hold your hand
To lead you between cloud-flowers blue
One day to come there too!
Think me never so far away
But I 'm to be one with you
As love loves and truth is true,
Always all human through and through.

IN AN INN

AND now, my lady, a word with you,
 Since we are parted
And I 'm to put you out of view,
 We to leave off where we started,
Each to follow a new other clue,
 And I 'm to be nothing more to you!

Let me this way begin
 My word to you, now you are gone,
And I am free to speak freely on:
 I met you at an inn
Where were thump and boisterousness,
 Pop-thought or all thoughtlessness,
Hearts cold and sharp as a flounder's fin.

Just at noon it was,
 You were on the porch,
You were there, thought I, because
 The sun had a nip and scorch,
And you built a nest in the shade
 One eagle-wood tree had made,
So to teach the tall skies
 To keep their distance—you were wise,

But—why teach me the like trick too?
 Was it that you thought I would love
 As the sun does, more than enough
 To kindle your coolish heart in you?
 Or, since you saw I must be true
 As Gods are, give my soul to you,
 Did you think you could play and wait
 As the child does, I your doll for mate?

I would not tickle you by talk
 Flies make when they sting and hawk,
 Nor fold me double to make my bow
 Trunkily, as men do now,
 Let each quill-weed show me how;
 Nor puff up would I to slip and prance
 Like squat-fellows at their doodle-dance,
 Nor bunch with the rest the same
 As likes in a hill, play potato-game,
 So, did you think, I would not do
 For mate or for match with you?

Know one thing in the world—this:
 More shall a man be, be as he is
 As God made him, let him hit or miss,
 Than he take his cue or his hair
 Or pantaloons-loop from that man there
 Of the black waist and same taste
 As every man anyhow everywhere.

Or there was your man to growl,
 Brute lip, surly scowl,
 Power in him to stand pat
 Just by his cheap ugly chat

And masterdom—you knew
 He was dog and drunken too,
Yet he held the mooning eyes of you
 Like the pit-viper coils askew
To hold his young tree-bird still and true—
 Your gentleman-rough in his lynxy fit!
Once I saw him slam and spit
 And ruffle, and you puff-proud of it!

Know one thing in the world—this:
 There goes no power like gentleness,
Power which is high and kind,
 Always heart-foremost inclined,
And wins out. Never you thought
 How your rough gentleman tricked and wrought,
If only you could hear him speak—
 Oh, how you played passing weak
Leaning there snug to his drunken cheek!

Or was I above your years,
 As old again?
Am I therefore in arrears
 With other men?
Is it not enough
 That I can love?
Or am I to lose my mate
 For being late,
And I know nothing is lost
 'Though all my purpose of life be crossed?

Is love a thing of youth,
 Of steel eye, sword tooth,

Of blood-rush, sorghum lip
 Meant to get the lush and drip,
 Let the sweet August go
 For rubbish or stub-undertoe?

Love is a heart to endure,
 Is the one thing sure
 Above needle-eye life, sees
 Tingling lip is a trick to please
 Only tingling lip
 Which tries to give the soul the slip,
 While one day the lip is gone,
 But never this heart it hung upon—
 So know one thing in the world—this:
 Love looks for love, truth of it is,
 Comes to stay and claim—which is why
 I 'll have you, my lady, by and by.

Stick you to your man,
 To his bumper-cheek;
 He will not block your plan,
 He will prove less than man;
 He will not rise to speak
 To deal you thought, but only to command
 By his prison-hand,
 While you will look up to love,
 Count the brute in him man enough.

* * * * *

Pretty birds whistle,
 Velvet dangles in each thistle,
 Your white rock trunks at the beach
 Half out of reach,

Sky-hawk levels his telescope-eye
Where the pin-fish fly
Like shooting stars among waves—
How they grow in their graves!

I wander about this lawn
You leaped upon,
Where you stooped to pick
Thorn-flowers or lily-stick,
While even now as I pass,
Lo, your footprints in the grass
As if for sign to me so true
To pluck up heart and follow you.

In spite of all I have said,
Which you will have read,
My jealousy and hungry love
And palpitating head,
I have this, evermore, to say,
My word to you be pledge enough:
You took my heart with you away,
You left me nought for it behind,
Yet, think my strongest as I may,
I cannot put you out of mind;
So I take your lead, I go your way,
I gather these flowers in your lawn,
Grass-pink, rose-campion,
I learn the song of your wren,
The one he meant for you then—
I bring them all three to you,
Song and flowers and my heart too,
And sure as like has like to pay,
I 'll have you, my lady, one fine day!

ATHANASIA

As out of the white sky
 Into the blue air
 Everyhow
 Everywhere
 Beauty is there
 Never to die,
So I see now
How somehow,
 Somewhere
My Rosalie is there
In the white blue air.

As out of the dead moon
 Is eternal June,
 Yellow field,
 Mellow yield
 Of Beauty so
 Of orange glow,
So is this clear:
Beauty is near,
 Is plain,
As there in the rare domain
I see my Rosalie again.

Life is in the rough,
 Is cough and cuff,

Yet just around
In sky and ground
Is Beauty spread
Which survives
Loves and lives
And dead—
Out in Orion-air
All the wild worlds are fair
To him who is not of them there.

Power comes and goes,
Changes teeth and toes,
While just about
Are seen
Roan and green
And silver pout
To weary never,
Here forever—
Sky riots to strike a blow
Which paints the rainfall-bow
All Beauty forever so.

Endurance, hard duty,
Power first, then Beauty:
First is the shock
Of fire and rock;
Then is the thud
Of silver rain
Against the mud,
And then
The violet again
For supersensuous fair,
Like my Rosalie in the white blue air.

Athanasia

Am I not for more
Than the God-gifted shore
Of all the stars
From Pictor to Mars,
More than sand
Or a headlight
Of land,
Since now I see
What makes in me
For Beauty like as out there
In the white blue air

To stay and stand
When sea and land
Are gone?
Now is night,
Now is morn,
Ebony night,
Lemon dawn,
And she,
My Rosalie,
Soul-fashioned, zenith-fair
In the white blue air.

PLUCK-LUCK

Do your best,
Never mind God
Or Hell and the rest!
A wink and nod
Of an angle-rod
Make as much,
Their way,
As a God could play,
As a star
Over far
Could sight or touch,
Just as much.

This I knew
Well as you
For a law
Among men
Worth fighting for,
As when
One day I stood
In the underwood
By my pasture-trees,
Queried a thought
If love were not
Just a will to please,

Pluck-Luck

A thing to do,
A word to say,
If false or true,
To make my way
To her heart—
As the world would say,
By a lover's art—
As if I must dare
To win the race
And my brother there
Of the handsome face,
The conquering air.

Should I lie
Or whisper truth,
Take her by a sigh
Or by my youth
Of honest dealing,
No trick nor stealing?
Enough said—
I fashioned
Truth is passioned
White and red,
Has a lip and shin,
Is sure to win.

The moon was set
Like an orange eye
For an amulet
In one purple sky,
While 'round it
Danced a dozen stars
Glad as a Lars

That they had found it.
My way I took
To her gate,
A path that lay
By our otter-brook—

The hour was late
Now first I saw
My rival mate
In her corridor
Of garden-vetch,
Saw him straight and stretch
Like a chancellor,
Saw him go
As he took
His long look
At her so
From the brook

One would think
He held his breath
To outwit death
At the brink
Of despair
To leave her there
For me if I came
With my aftergame,
And she so fair
He rather would lose
All his soul could choose
Than leave her there

As I came,
New night
Overhead,

Pluck-Luck

Gold and red,
Like the flight
Of a flame,
And she just there
In her garden-chair
Of archangel flowers
Under poppy bowers
To wait,
Long and late,

Til I came!
And I knew
That my claim
Was as true
As was his,
'Though I miss
What he had,
The look of a lad,
The mould of a man
On your model-plan
To enrapture,
To capture,

So I said:
She shall see
There 's value in me
More than red
In the lip,
More than head,
More than hip,
She shall know
I can do
What is true,
Con or pro,
Luck or no.

Could I share
Just the air
That lay at her lip,
Just a sip
Ere I spoke,
I should pipe
As the wren
At his reed again
When he woke,
Til she heard,
Til she drank
Every word.

Through nep
Light of step
Was my way
To the flowers
Where she lay
In her bowers—
Like a bee
I was there
On the wing
Just to see
And to sing
And to share

Of the sweet
New soul which was there
At my feet:
“I am not,”
So I said,
“City thought,
Fashion read;
I am not
Round of mould,

Pluck-Luck

Beauty wrought,
Cloth of gold
To behold,

“With a grace
Of the face,
With a sigh
For a lie,
A run-about play
Of the tongue
For a way
To look young,
Pretty shape,
Mighty charm
To the arm
And the nape.

“Yet I 'm this,
I am true
Mighty love
Deep as his
And for you;
Just above
Are the stars,
Just below
Is a breath,
And I know
Truth jars
Unto death;

“Yet I know
I am true
As a glow
Of the dew;

About and above
Life is small
Matched with my love
Which is all,
Which is you—
My stars they are there,
My heaven it is fair,
Which is you.

“Yet is he
Above me
In the straight
Handsome play
Of his gait,
In the fain
Wonder-way
Of his brain,
In the choice
Velvet tune
Of his voice
New as June.

“So his love,
Which is true,
Love of you,
Is enough
To bring me to this:
I would not stay
His hand for a day;
What I gain or miss
Is nothing to me—
Soul hungers to be,
To love
For nothing above,

Pluck-Luck

“For nothing to gain,
Only to do
What is plain
Highest true
Just for you.
Take him so!
Let me pass
As a face
In a glass
Out of place—
Better so
That I go,

“That I love
And you know
What it cost,
What I lost
In the game
Which is love
When it came
To this end:
I gave up
A friend for a friend
To save up
My love to the end;

“I gave him
To you
To save him
From loss;
I bear the new
Whole weight of my cross,
Which I must,
Which I trust,

All for you.
There 's the test,
There 's the best
Of me too.

"Shall I not
Make the most
Of my lot,
Play host
And not guest,
Do my most,
Do my best,
Nor complain
Of my loss
Nor refrain
From my cross
Or my chain?

"Is the best
I may do
Not the blest
Of me too?
Is my first
Highest thought
To be curst,
Counted worst,
Counted nought,
If the gain
Of a gain
Be not plain?

"If I do
What in me
And for you,
You 'll agree,

Pluck-Luck

Is all true,
Is all kind,
Is all great,
Shall I mind
Of my fate,
Shall I fear
Luck is late
Loss is near?"

Night was warm
In its storm
Of the stars;
Tulip-bars,
Pimpernels,
Little bells,
Purple bells
At her feet
Darted out
Wink and pout
To entreat,
Wild and sweet.

There she lay
Just to prink
Like a bee
In a pink
Full of play,
Looked at me
Half to see,
Half to think,
Then to say:
"Not of him
Had I thought
With his trim

“Look and prim,
Handsome-wrought
Mighty brow
Of brain-play,
Pretty bow,
Happy way,
Nor his youth—
Rather truth,
Rather strength,
Rather strife
Than mere length
Of a life,

“Than mere power
To make rout,
To win out
In an hour”—
And right there
Came her look
Like a new
Open book
To me there,
As so too
Came her touch,
No hand like it such

For so fair,
For so true
As she drew
Me her way,
Looked me through
Her sweet way,
Bade me stay,
Bade me take

Pluck-Luck

A pink rose
For her sake—
And right there
In the fair

Spotted night
Was my rose
Which I chose,
Which I took
In the bright
Solemn look
Of the skies,
By the neap
Solemn brook
For that deep
Solemn look
In her eyes,

For that soul
And the whole
Of her heart,
And her lack
Of an art.
So I state,
Looking back
To that day,
It will pay
To be great,
To be true,
To be you,

To do well,
Do your best
In the clod.
As for God,

As for Hell
And the rest,
Better you
To be great,
Make your fate,
Better you
To be true,
Do your best.

BRILLA

THERE leans a book
Over my shelf—
Stop, have a look,
The book is myself,
For I wrote it and I know
How the letters trip and go,
How they followed my elbow-blow.

There swings my tree
Against the storm—
I gave it knee
And peak and form
By my way I fashioned it
From the root and single spit,
So my tree and soul are perfect fit.

This is my chip
Of blazing stone—
I gave it lip
And plume and zone
To dartle, by which I know
'T is all as I would be, and so
I watch it steal Orion's glow.

Here is one box
Of rainbow flowers,
Summits of phlox
Like country showers

Of color, and they come to be
Flame and crock and velvety
To match the very soul in me.

One blue clear sky
Halts overhead;
One blue clear eye
Will turn it red
And round, so there comes to be
Myself out there I come to see,
All immenses but part of me.

Comet may sweep
Across my sky
To take the leap
Of eternity
And I have it, for the path is true,
I breathe it, for my sky is blue,
I am it, for I leap there too.

Overhead
The dew is ripe,
Is steel or red,
Is oxeye-stripe;
My peabody whistles between leaves,
Underneath the wine-vine weaves—
Oh, how my heart gallops and heaves

As just inside
The prison air,
Hoping to hide,
Yet waiting me there
Is Brilla—she knows my way
Of drinking at each fountain-day,
Of playing as the tune-birds play,

So comes to me
Out of her net
Of briony
And mignonette,
Out of her flock of laughing swallows,
Spikenard nooks, talking hollows—
Oh, how the moon steps down and follows

After her there
To light her way
By cunning care
To where I play
My song between the willows
When the grasses bend in billows
Where this moon-wind stops and pillows.

To see her now
Between her stalks
Of laurel-bough
And holly-hocks
You would think she meant to be
Herself just, all apart from me,
With her toss and song of divinity.

Yet am I there
Fast in her heart
To claim my share,
To play my part
Of part of her evermore soul,
For she is more than brow or jole,
More than the roundabout blazing whole.

This is my night
Of summer power,
Each world is bright,
Each little flower

Puts a hand up so I may see
This earth has more to offer me
Than plunket or pot-herb-sap or glee,

To wit, the thing
I tie to most,
This towering
Of thought and ghost
To see how Beauty holds the palm,
So I climb by giant arm
To capture the unseen cheek and charm,

The which is soul,
Beyond her too,
More than the whole
Deep dome of blue
I go to, while I look to see
Worlds upon worlds there lavishly,
Yet all the smallest part of me.

This is her flower,
There is her bird,
They take an hour
To be seen and heard
As we do—how well they show
Beauty is the way to go,
Beauty is soul incognito.

Belamour flower
I take and give;
Now is our hour
To love and live
And we there in Muscatel vine,
She like the swanflower true and fine
And all loftiness and all mine.

'T is so I hold
To her tiny hand,
Her lock of gold,
Her lip of sand
To fasten to what is more worth
Than these trinkets of time and earth,
Her thought and heart beyond any girth,

As sky is too,
While so I know
Our way is true,
The way we go
To get together in soul and heart
In another day, by a soulfuller art,
No more this clay to hold us apart.

Under this tree,
Both she and I,
To love, to be,
To dream, to die,
High up over hope or fear
To strike for what is true and peer,
And so the language of death is clear.

BY LOVE

AN attachée of supremity-ground,
 A dictator,
As ever was found
 In kilts above ground
For curator,
 Was the man of the place, was this man
Of great crown-buttons, with scarce more than
 The look of a lynx in his night-light span.

Unthinkable old,
 So my story is,
Of such a king
 Over Salamis
To strike amiss
 By his reckoning,
As all the world, you may take my word,
 Never before or since has heard
Since the hearts of men by their lot were stirred.

He was young, took the king-look through,
 Each eye like a knot
Looked split in two,
 Half umber, half blue
To hide his plot,
 So only the devil himself could tell,
By measuring up the parallel,
 How much was man in him, how much was hell.

Ultimate despot he grew to the core:

 "Now is a king

For you to adore,

 Whim and implore,"

Was his sermoning,

 For so he kept his people under,

Kept them too stupid to stay his blunder—

 That he was hated is any wonder?

Not more should his people know than he knew,

 Should keep their place,

Keep well perdue,

 Well under him too

To court his grace,

 As so he shaped them little of mind

Til slaves they grew and were all inclined

 To put every independence behind.

What a tax he put, and they gave their gold!

 So he kept them poor,

So kept his hold,

 As the tale is told,

Made his kingdom sure,

 As he thought, by his power over all,

His people scarce more than talking doll—

 So was the kingliness in him small.

Young he was, and so wild at the feast

 Men thought him mad,

Or that wanton at least

 As any beast

By his way he had

 Of holding to all was prodigal,

Of holding such drunken carnival

 As to full the brute in him, pit and caul.

Up at his hill-top his palace stood,
 Poked over the brow
Like a woman's hood
 In wild olive snood,
So all should see how
 He could perch up above men in air,
Could make his home like the heavens are fair
 To spin his spider-life out, nor a care.

Up at the castle each night was afire
 With crown-jewel blaze,
With new wild desire
 To reach lower, higher
Than eye could gaze,
 To glut his gluttonous lip,
Let the bloodhounds of carnival slip,
 Unload a nation to stuff his kip.

Yet never he loved! His time was not yet,
 So his heart stood cold!
Soul is to net
 Out of fire and jet
And hunger and gold!
 Love is to come like a ring of sun
To tempt the aloe-blossom to run
 A path above earth, and the two are one.

King must stroll as men do to take
 A hand at the flowers,
A look at the drake
 In his meadow-lake,
To idle the hours—
 So he is off to his lily-brook,
There to have a leap and a look
 To see how this world is one fashion-book.

Right as he comes to the opposite side
Of his talking brook
Where bluefins hide,
Where maples are dyed
Like a noble duke,
Face to face to him there she stood,
A maid like a Paradise-bird in a wood,
Like the very lilies are fine and trued.
Never he knew of such Beauty before
In the times of men,
Of such smile as she wore,
Of such soul in store,
Her laugh like the note of a wren
Once he ripples his song
Where clouds are curled
In between skies which are coral and pearled,
As if he came from another world.
His heart is lost as the dew is gone
In one lofty sun!
Never before such Beauty shone
For king to feast upon
Since thought begun!
To speak his soul all suns above
Or tongues below counted not enough—
All a king could do was to say—I love!
“Dear Sire,” she answered, “there 's the one word,
So my people say,
Never was heard
From your lip, nor stirred
Your heart in your day!
To think that such fortune should fall to me
To hear it first, or that I should be
The woman to lead you to love and see!

"Only a peasant girl, as you know,
And you a king
To have the world go
As you want it, so
I flinch at the thing
To think how the world bows down to you,
To think how small I am in your view,
Then to think of this—I love you too!

"Yet are we parted—this brook between
To hold us apart,
Lilies set in evergreen
Lie there to intervene;
They ply their art
And we may not nip them in the root—
Lilies are not to hawk and loot,
To stand against the romp of the brute.

"There are my people, my lilies too,
To stand between us!
How their lips are blue
Or whited through,
Their look to wean us
From any love we could have in view
Like your love of me, my love of you,
Save that we take them to heart with us too!

"See they are people like me and you,
Have hands and feet
And dimple and thew,
Have great hearts too;
Freedom is sweet
To them as freedom is sweet to you
To think and feel and speak and do—
If you love me, oh, love my people too!

"Give them what you have power to give,
 Their right to be free,
Their right to live
 Above 'but' or 'if,'
Their right to be
 Each one his own great self and king,
Loftiness just for love of the thing,
 No more to crawl to your club and sting.

"Give them of the spirit of things to drink,
 Of the wild white air
Of freedom to think
 To the outer brink,
Greatness to dare,
 Mightiness to strike to do
Noblier, if it be, than you—
 If you love me, oh, love my people too!

"So shall they love you too in the end,
 That you can know!
On friend for friend
 You may depend,
For soul is so;
 So take my word to your heart for true:
My people are one in the heart with you—
 Love them and they shall love you too!

"We are as one, my people and I,
 Nor meant to part
More than our sky
 And its redded dye—
One soul, one heart;
 So here is my truest word to you
As my heart is yours and my soul is true:
 Would you love me, you shall love them too."

There is my strong man pinned like a leaf
To its olive branch!

A maid for chief

And the words are brief

And the love is staunch!

"Take her," his soul says, "for this is love;

Pay the price, that is never enough;

Take her people too—they are worth your love."

What steel cold sword in his eye is gone!

Comes another man

Than was counted on

When he was born;

Comes the larger plan

Than to monarchize by kick and blow,

His people under thumb and toe—

Love has him—nature meant it so.

Now in his eyes is her image set;

He has her in arms

For queen and pet

And coronet,

One freshet of charms!

In his eyes at any hour is seen

Her soul there where the brute had been—

Love is his kingdom and spirit-queen.

Down in her eyes, which are perfect blue

For forget-me-not,

Is his image too

As his soul is true

Beyond kink or plot,

While 'round them gathers the evening dew

In moonrise and the drops are blue—

See how their people are 'round them too!

What tall strong man in his giant-make,
 And she so small
As to hang to his neck
 Like an emerald-speck!
How love is all!
 How love is all in the world there is
Frees men, yet lets them not slip amiss!
 What is there shall govern a world like this?

ALIOTH

HOLD to your star, the bright best in you,
Worth more than all the rest in you;
Count not the magnitude of it nor sheen,
—Stars dip deepest which are not seen—
Just a light now and then
To snuff out, flash up again,
Little scintillations of men
To show you your star is there
Somewhere
In the deep tall air.

You yourself just, never another,
Be he soul-fashioned and best brother,
You to be you, there 's your trick
To master monk and candlestick,
Your star for you, his for him
With his bob-squat maudlin altar-whim,
Beggar-lip,
You to seize at your star,
Near or far,
Sweep your sky by the eagle-dip.

Your star first, then next
This heavenly-body text:
In the wide sky there 's not a sun
Steals his fire from another one,

Nor looks for what of it or why
He punctures an empty sky,
Dilates his clean gold-axle eye,
Save the Beauty of it, fair
 As the glassy air
 Forever there.

Hold to your star, there 's the thing
Will not wince nor pray nor cling
To Power, which is anenst it—
Power is there and you against it
To be whipped into shape and size
By the thunder-stroke skies
 To learn to rise—
Power to crush you in the shut,
Like as you crush a nut
 To get the gut;

Power about you for you to strike
Against it God-fashion-like
For fear of nothing—what loss
Counts against one virtue-cross?
 Beauty is Power,
 Power is Beauty—
Hard endurance, harder duty
To ripen a man that he leap
Into the star-pointed deep
Blossom-like, evening-fair
 As the worlded air.

Did she not so, she who was the whole
Bright heart in me and striving soul
Who gave me a world to know it
Was meant that I should outgrow it

So as one day to break my shell
To see for sure how all is well
Above the smallness that things seem;
How, 'spite of such little as I see,
There 's more next close in just about me
Beyond all human dream?

Get you up to what you are,
Like yonder patient star
In crimson wings and marigold,
Never less, never old,
Out of reach of earth
And death and birth—
One wingèd yonder star,
Iris-eyed, heavenly-far
Burning in its ashes to rise
Phenix of the skies!

MIDFIELD THOUGHTS

THERE was I by my flag-root ditch
Right at the dawning
Of one mighty morning
I leaned against my round striped elm,
One which fetched a forward pitch
Like a sailor at the helm,
As if to spread for me an awning
To dash the sun off—overhead
Cheeped the piefinch, underneath
Pill-beetles began to breathe,
Witch-chicks thimble the tops of trees,
Hops were in bell, each merlin was up,
Each poppy with copper cup
Took each moment to scoop the breeze.—
What counts a morning of sun,
An evening of dark,
An hour begun
On the wings of a lark,
And she gone,
My Rosalie gone
To not return,
'Though winds mourn, 'though skylids burn?

JUST about me in my field
Was dew-spatter, lily-yield;

There tumbled among the brake
My single carrotty finch
To strike his straight blow at a chinch
Before he straightened to undertake
His mountain-song to surprise
The gold-eyed silent skies.
Thistle-butterfly and painted lady
Kept together as if mated,
Sun-trout began to look sun-sated,
Took a new pond-hole to be shady,
As there in my wide pasture-field,
There where spirits come to be healed,
I only thought, as I thought:
What is all of it, what not,
Grass that is ripe and well meant,
Sun-blown jumping merriment,
How could they make me content
And she gone,
My Rosalie gone
Out of the dark,
Out of the dawn?—
Oh, for the note of a lark,
Oh, for the song I lack
To call her back!

Choke-cherry,
Tapered balsam,
Poke-berry
And the small sum
Of pretty bee-ways
For little relays
Of honey-dew moly,
Heaven wholly

Midfield Thoughts

To glut the wind
Til every blossom has been thinned—
Song-robins mell-mellow,
Sand-dunes half yellow,
My Pequot Indian mound,
A generation under ground
And I top,
Not a breath to stop—
All Beauty next about
To find, yet past all finding out.

There was my cat-call bird
Straight over his mud-bottom ling,
One lynx-eyed note in every word
Til the wild wood-wild begun to ring—
So what mattered if life
Were battered by strife,
What counted trouble
More than a bubble,
Save that she was not there,
My Rosalie, kind and fair
As the silverly air?
Gone—and whatever I joy to see,
The world is no more the world to me.

But hark, there 's my robin-song
Piped in the pasture yonder!
Hark to each bull-bell gong
In sea-grass, chimes disjointed
'Though soulsome, eagle-pointed
Til I am brought to ponder
How in among graves and barrows
Floats the happy chat of sparrows—

Cunning in a spider's net
Which catches sun and thunder-wet
To stitch up gold and green and jet
For Beauty for no matching yet—
Or there over the boulder-wall
Meadows in meadow-sweet—there's the call
Of one tufted titmouse, how he will pause
Between songs, as if for your applause!—
There, too, is the king-blue sky
Departing always, never to die,
But always and always the same blue sky—
So I said to me, Was not she
Part of the one eternity
Of Beauty I see about,
Past finding, past all dying out?

'Round me coils my brook
To go its way
Out into the bay
Far off where I look
As I say:
Out in their mighty host
Of waters my brook is lost,
While just here at my feet
It coils about me still,
Sun-sparkle, picture-fill
Of valued volume complete,
My same brook here at my feet
For always to coil and go
And leave me and yet stay,
As if for a purpose to show
Spirit takes an endless way
The same way so.

GUNFLINT

WAR to the knife,
Each man for his life,
Cossack and Jap
At the thunder-clap
Of belching guns
To spit them through,
To flash the blue
Like a flock of suns—
Hail to the chief
And his beckoning
His men to come on,
Hail to his reckoning,
Past belief,
How he counted on
Columns of lives
To settle the thing,
Childlings and wives,
Nor a pity-ring
Of his muffled heart—
Now for a start,
Now for the hill
To smash them down,
To riddle and kill,
To swamp the town
By his bullet-spill—

Now for a blow
Where they breathe
Quick and low
At his monster-thud
And they swallow their teeth
And they drink their blood—
Cannon to kill
And the field is red
Of the blood they spill—
Once it was said
They never knew
Why they fought and bled—
Think of it, too,
Of the thousands dead
To settle your facts
By spit and axe,
By a blow instead
Of the spirit-art
Of head and heart—
At it again,
Your shell-shot rain
Of noble might
To make things right
By power of pain—
Stab at the heart,
Smash at the face,
Plant your killing-art
In every place
To crush and cower
And smallen a race,
To capture power
And pomp and place—
Strike at the jaws
Of murder-laws,

Gunflint

Rip out the ribs,
Crush in the nowl,
Scatter their soul
To the finger-nibs—
Small matter the boy
In his April-blood
Who folds his joy
Like a folded bud—
Nor conscience counts
If a king may rise
Nearer the skies
Now his kingdom mounts,
And there the Word,
Your sacred law,
That a king is lord
Worth fighting for!
Now to your cuts,
Scatter the field
With blossom-yield
Of fingers and guts—
Do men count it odd
They serve their God
To worship a day,
To smirk and pray
While they count it well
To send the others,
Their neighbor-brothers,
The way of hell?
Cossack and Jap
To the cannon-gap
For slaughter, for power
To crush a race
Out of state and place
In its leaf and flower—

Dragoons and tars,
How their faces white
Soften the night
Like whited stars,
Now they lie in state
Across ditch and slate,
Conquered and gone
And you look on
At the hellish work
With your Christian smirk,
You Powers of the earth!—
What 's your worship worth?

THINKING OF PRESTON

OVER Lantern Hill one downing sun
Spit fire like the boom of an evening gun
Where winter hung a last rag
Of snow for truce to one spindle-crag,
Stone walls beginning to arm with thistles
Now the yaffle taps, kildee whistles,
Woodruff takes root to stout
To cast a shadow for a trout,
And all the swallows are there
To cotton to the careful air
Or to Avery Pond for its pretty pout.

To think of being in Preston
Where I got my fine first lesson
In swamp-apples, in May
And chipmunk-cheep
And that wondrous October pumpkin-heap
In each field, low or high land,
Which rose there like a coral island!
How a child is thinking who may say,
Who shall know, from his small span
Of earth, his heart-mighty sweep
Of faith and feeling, so true, so deep,
If he be not, i' faith, the real man?
Eunice knew my wants,
Knew each field in my uncle's farm
Of meadow-track, pond-hole haunts,

Now she and I would take an hour
To angle for a cuckoo-flower
Or bluestart, seize at that silver charm
Of lying, face down, to look
For minnows to twinkle in a brook.

Those are marvellous days
To seem so much, to be so small—
Pick-nothing lightest popinjays
Were we, only knee and knuckle-ways,
Yet they filled the soul—and soul is all.
Now look you, you of the season-gang,
How you plowed your way up the world to power,
Lip white as an alabaster flower,
And died, while the bell-tower rang
How you gulped a world down, swallowed the whole
Into pretty much just an empty soul!

How I grew, and she grew,
So soon it came our time to think
Each of the other, yet each knew
Of nothing more than a pigeon-wink,
Of nothing a whit-bit more than this
That love in the world should come first
To stop questioning and stop thirst,
Whether the purpose hit or miss!
One would think love should wait
For the full man to grow proportionate
To life at a purpose, purpose-great,
Never just to get together,
After the fashion of reeve and ruff,
To swallow only the glutton-love
Of cluck or a lemon feather.

Eunice, do you remember how
In my uncle Nathan's berry-field
—What drupes were there, what a yield!—
I waited for you once in my bough
Of shagbark to try to hide,
While you came late by the pasture-wall
And there was snuggled to my side
When I feared you might not come at all—
And then—you know how two souls meet
When waiting is long, footfall sweet—
Oh, how we held us, heart to heart,
Like a leaf and its cheek, not meant to part—
You know how I flew at those lips
Like a bee darts back and forth, then dips
For sweet—'t is worth relating
How after that you always kept me waiting!

Or one evening—you remember
Our first week in our first September
We saw the moon together—
Oh, how I watched it spray your hair
Til a pheasant's feather dartled there!—
I was trying to ask whether
Such a moon, with such pale gold face,
Might not be one brighter place
We go to, once all is over here,
When you drew close to me, drew
My arm about you as if to say:
"Be the time far off or near,
Whenever you go, I go too,
There shall be no parting-day."

Such another evening as that
Was summer—we stood listening

To one yellow-breasted chat,
One star in each cheek of sky was glistening,
Each blade of grass speared a drop of dew
Like a finger putting a ring on for you
To sprinkle olive, moss-pink, blue,
While all the while my soul-desire
Was there in your own pink lip, and higher,
Your eye for one jewelful of fire.
One wild rose-bush lay tangled dense
In the fingers of your fence,
Your hand against the bowers,
One flower more among the flowers,
When soon I saw you—youth needs must
Untwist a rose—draw back from the thrust
It gave for fillip of scorn,
While, now I drew its needle-brand
Out of the tiny flower-hand,
I sought to have you understand
Rose grew never without a thorn.

By morning, now sun was up,
Our sky looked like an emptied cup,
Still over us, but bottom up,
So, by rights, one would look around
To see stars scattered on the ground,
When, lo, we found them, there they were,
No question, and all eyes on her:
One water-lip, like a diamond-drop,
Curled at the end of each plume of grass,
A whole sun in it, all for a crop
Of stars like the harvest-heaven has!
So said I: Between two such skies
Would you think love fails, man ever dies,

Since, whichever way you go,
There 's your galaxy put
Overhead, underfoot
For certain, that you may know
How, whether you fall or rise,
You are prisoner 'twixt two skies.

God's one Preston—that much I learned
When thought smoldered, heart burned!
Since I knew you I 've known many ways,
Put the cup up, drained the days,
While, oh, how I would now turn track
To have my pond-hole and chipmunk back,
And mink-brook, deep because always black;
My blueling that dodges and dips
In front of two bluebottle lips
As if afraid the flower, so like it,
Were another blueling to dodge and strike it!—
Wherever I go, whatever part is
Mine to take to beat back death
Or try to get a longer breath,
There, only just there, my heart is
By the pasture-wall and my shagbark tree
And—Eunice, do you remember me?

EUTHANASIA

HAVE not a fear of death, O friend,
Nor think it an end!
True, here is life, while out there
Is what or what not
Of the whole vast everywhere
Supremely wrought
Where I see it crumble, come to death
For want of breath,
As an osmund will die for lack of dew,
A plum-leaf bend a last bow to you
If the sun split it through—
They need only dew and fire
To float them higher,
While you there are other stuff,
And not enough
Is plum-life your life to argue plum-death
To be your death—
For look how the hawfinch sits and taps
Moonlight in twenty laps
Before he naps,
While high as he may see for springing
Is his cloud he puts to ringing
By the chime-bell in his singing,
Soul perhaps,
Then cold comes, and he has done
All he thought ever or begun,
His wheeling song about the sun

For Nile-green grace,
While you there, you rise on his song
Beyond place,
Beyond lute and love and scuppernong
To take fancy which puts soul swinging
Outside finch-music or life clinging
To where
Is Beauty supersensuous fair
And no other, while you know
However much your world may show
Of power to glut and body-grow,
Soul is not so!

There 's a Beauty not of the world,
Neither diamonded nor pearled;
I see it when
Losses make the most of men:
Or there it is when I see
Life for such uncertainty,
And you
Bound so to be brave and true
And not question and not know
Why under heaven it is so
Beyond this, that you shall be pastor
Of your own destiny and grand master.
You see it when the best you do
Little profits you,
Or, i' faith, it may sweep you under,
While men look on, call it blunder.
The best in you will have small use
Of glut-pot or hunting-noose,
Yet the best is there
For Beauty supersensuous fair,
And use, too, some certain other-where.

A supernaculum of Beauty
Is love of truth, is love of duty,
While either may
Put you under bond to pay
Your life for it and not know
More than that Beauty breathed it so
You should give life up for love and go.

Once was a butcher, so is told,
Grew to where he could not kill
For his daily gold,
Could not spill
Lambs' blood, could not strike the face
And kind eye and gentle grace,
Could nohow do it
Nor coax his bosom half way to it,
Never too old
To learn new ways of getting gold,
So took this to him: Better I
Cease killing; better I
Go my way, give them their way,
Than I kill them in their fair day;
There 's up and down on every stairway,
Gold is not all,
Since now one truth stands manifest:
I make most of me and best
If I live so all the rest,
In field or stall,
May have their life their way,
Nor I to rob them of their small day.
Thus it was
Somewhat of him claimed nobler cause
Than gut-growth by natural order laws,
Till he should see

Man has of him more than he may be
In one small pocket of eternity.

Death comes, while how to meet it
Better you probe than how to beat it,
Seeing this that you
Have more at heart than you may do
Or think even, fight it through
As you will to gain an end,
Drop a foe, win a friend,
For, compass all you may long to reach,
Your whole world, all they hope or preach,
Yet is there more of you,
Mighty more
Than world-life, a thousand million score
More than your whole thinking too,
To show
There 's no Heaven where you would go
Of which you would know,
Nothing above soulfullest man
For which you would plan,
No gain, no compensation
For being great,
For being conqueror of fate,
A God in your own creation.
There 's the new sphere,
Something otherwise than here,
Yet purposey, not for pining—
There 's nowhere an ear
Against sky or sphere
Will catch your whining—
New purpose, more purpose, new ends,
But the old friends, always the old friends,

Since we go together, you and I,
Together forever,
Souls meant not to die,
But achieve, pursue ever
One landlordly march
To where there is an end never
Through the blue gold arch
On and on,
Each new purpose more masterly done
As we reach out towards the spirit-sun.

Who would wish to think
Of a universe with a brink
And God there to say:
"Here 's an end—I 've done my best
For you and you, the thing was a jest—
I 've had my day,
Lost my hold, run my race,
Here 's an end of power and place,
I 've had my day, I 've had my day?"
Straight otherwise
Are those enamel eyes
Which puncture the skies
So you, too, may get your sight
Of the super-cosmic might
Of soul
Which is over and above the whole,
And you one certainest part,
O gentle heart!
Yet death comes, so how to meet it,
And that way beat it?
Play pot-fly, would you, to mouse
By the footfall of a louse,
To build a nest

To tickle in, make merry
At a squill or winterberry,
Nor build your wide side up and best?

How to meet it
To not fear but to welcome-greet it?
There 's one way
Certain and clear as any day—
Not spider-play
To sting some brother, sap his heart,
Swallow his country, bowl him under
The spark of blunder,
Your trigger and torpedo art—
Not to school
Brothers to bondage so you may rule,
Nor yet
To count life worth only power to get
More power, more gold,
And you here just to tighten your hold—
Nor yet
To knuckle under to let power
Dominion you,
Bring you to mince and cower
At cassock or cowl, to look through
Their hat-flap to see what is true—
No creed
Save what you build yourself—there 's need
Of you,
Of all you may think or do
Which is you—
Man above priestism, above passions,
Fashioned to fashion his own fashions—
As if their pulpity view
Made for more value than you, just you,

Since ye are Gods
To make mighty against all odds,
Self king over self to perfect man—
There 's your plan
Of fortification against power
Of God or man,
That you may come to command,
Beyond fear, the fine other spirit-land,
You your own God at your own right hand.

IMPERIALISM

HECTOR

HERE 's the place—how will this do
 For luck to you,
This edge of the world's edge
And river-rune
This amber part of June?
I pledge you my pledge
'T is secret as a woman's age,
 The place is,
To fight it out in, so here 's my gage
To cross licks with you—
 No paces,
 But hand to hand—
On guard, then, take your stand!

AJAX

So! The place is well—
Not a wind's whimper to tell
 Who put first blow,
 Who got the last—
 Time is past
For pretty palaver—
 So, then, let go

Your upper-cut for power
 To settle who shall have her
 In an hour—
 Luck hugs the best elbow-growth
 Since she may not have us both.

HECTOR

Right reason that! Nature's way!
 Two want her—one gets her in the end—
 Power settles which—
 Rags to him who drops a stitch!—
 Square off, defend!
 Best man gets her for matter of course,
 The universe is ruled by force—
 A fair day
 For fair play
 And, good my friend, your hand to hitch
 To this: he has her
 To play pigeon or Belshazzar
 Who topples 't' other into the ditch!

AJAX

A word—your word
 She shall not know
 We struck a blow—
 A woman's heart once stirred,
 And who may tell
 Which way 't will jump, whether to him
 Who took her fancy by knuckle-vim,
 Or by pity to the one who fell?
 Caution, lest he who wins
 Should, by keen kicking, lose his shins!

Imperialism

She must not know
We struck a blow.

HECTOR

Bah to that! Syrupy palaver!
A tentative too pale and flat!
My hand for this, I 'll not have her
 If I lose—I for man,
She to side as she chooses,
 On the woman-plan,
But she shall not have the one who loses—
Else why fight for her? Better some trick
Of hitch-halt to mimic sick
 To catch her pity—
 May do for you,
 From your feather-view,
 To play cockatoo—
 Neither rough nor pretty!

AJAX

So! Take that, then, a louis d'or
 On the under-jaw,
 My flexor-mark!—

HECTOR

And you that, by exchange,
An eagle in the cheek to stop your bark
 At close range!—

AJAX

These knuckles in your teeth—now reel,
Fold double as a knotted eel!—

HECTOR

Not so! Take that to you
For a cross-cut to split you through,
Bloodhound!—you want skill—

AJAX

But not power, not will,
As how d' you fancy that
For a death-blow to stagger at?—

HECTOR

Good, but no skill to lodge it,
Simple enough to duck and dodge it,
But not so simple this
Plump under-dig for you to miss!—

AJAX

Your throat, whelp, till I pick
The pipes out—

HECTOR

Scarce yet—'t is not a loving trick—
The Juneful air about
Is too sweet tasting to let slip
In your condor-grip—

AJAX

Slow work, too crab-wise slow
To pound a way to her, blow and blow—
Men who would fight for wives
Should come to knives—

Imperialism

HECTOR

Short order, then, to a clinch,
Death to him who yields an inch!—

AJAX

Smart said—now for your throat
To put soul afloat!—

HECTOR

Mebbe so—that was a welt
Below belt,
An underhanded lick,
A dirty demon trick—

AJAX

As here 's another—
I 'm not hugging you for brother—
Whip a knife out—to the knife
For the woman, or your life!—

A VOICE

Stop—enough! What matters
The slash or stab?—Your best point,
A pick-axe in the elbow-joint
To tear each other to tatters
Were less than nothing
In any kind of soul-betrothing,
Which is heart-work, which is above
Slashing eyes in, teeth out
And blood about—
They call it love
Who know best—I 'm sure the plan

Points a gentler kind of gentleman
Than game-cock—scarcely recruits
From swashbucklers, brutes.
I was longing for song,
I was longing to be free
An hour from the rivalry
Of right and wrong—
Chance took me to the river
So I might see the quiver
Of an aspen, of a river-lip
Which does not let the sun-cheek slip—
So I might catch the sway
And Sun-tune of a piñon-jay,
Watch a piemag pass,
A bee at a breath of lemon-grass,
Catch his flute and ellipse
Where he bobs and sips,
When, right as I was swallowing rhymes
From a treeful of thistle-birds,
They carolling like a stack of chimes,
I trying to learn the organ words,
Lo in the river there drifted a drop
Of blood my way—it seemed to stop,
Changed then its course as if to go back,
Quite as much as to say:
“Follow me, I have a knack
Of knowing, I know the way,
The whence I came, follow me
The river up, you shall see
The whence I came, the where men pick
Each other's throats out—'t is true—
Send their steel teeth to the quick
For tender love just—love of you!”
I saw a diamond-shrike sweep

Sunward, away from where
Blood fretted the pleasant air,
Into his unknown deep,
Knowing not of right or wrong,
Only his life-long song
And Beauty and wing he knew,
And I thought how it must be true
Of soul one day, the way he had
Of not knowing good or bad,
But Beauty only, his way of flying
Starward, where I see no dying,
His way of taking earth
For what it is worth,
A place to touch just for springing
Into his cloud of gold
Where nought wrinkles or is old,
To set his white sky ringing
For joy just, joy which pierced his singing.
Women mate *men*—ah, I see,
There 's Beauty in a broken jaw,
In heart-hate, in savagery,
Worth coddling, worth loving for,
So man may measure, by elbow-angle,
His soul-size, since to wrangle
Is the man of it to let loose
The hell in him of lynx and moose
To mark him captor-captain
Of hearts by the kind of force
Heart hurries to, is so rapt in,
He my high-chosen one of course!
Mark you now this: By the whole high whole
Hierarchy of Heaven is it not given
To men to be greater than soul
Or to think of it even!

Less they may be, most are,
So you get brother-slaughter, get war,
Get gut-royalty, get the cock-eye vision
Which aims, by mud-weevil precision,
To put power above Beauty, above man
To unshape, unskull him, closet him,
Clap him in place, posit him
To one circumference, one view,
So he mark toe-time to you or you—
Wholly because you think power
Governs the universe, so you
Would take a hand at it to govern too,
Nor see in each little finger-flower,
In your dew-trinkling lotos-bower
There 's that behind which governs power—
For look to it how all I see
Goes tumbling-crumbling eternally
Where worlds fly up, where a comet dives,
Yet Beauty, only Beauty survives!
There 's the man of it—my man!
He shall be soulfullest soul
To round up and complete the whole
High heart in him—my man
To out-fashion dagger-work, to know this:
Force is weakness, there 's not a right
Was royaled ever by force of might—
My man for master-gentleness,
Which is Beauty—how now are no scars
Across the faces of the stars!
Put up your dirks—women mate men
For manliness—your butcher-trick
To match knuckles and elbow-pick
Makes not a point in ken
Of mightiness, which is soul

Above worm-work and the whole
Rough round of slaughter which makes not a part
Of dominion such as plays
For more soul and better days
And higher thought and deeper heart.
As well love one of you
As tear my soul in two,
Wed the cold squirming Niger,
Crab-rat, fang-footed tiger!
Oh Beauty, thee just I sing,
Soul of my truth, wing of my wing
To circle above worlds, beyond lives,
Where only what is fair survives,
Only to thy lip I cling!

KNOW THY CHICK

FATHER

My daughter? You want my daughter?

Why, Count, there she is,
All her own Mistress-Miss,
Yet you never caught her,
At her greeting or adieu,
Giving half a look to you!
There she is, able to say,
Eager to have her own wish and way!

You love her? Ah, so!

But, Count, there 's your penny-look
And she an heiress—you know
Whichever way you hide
Your hungry soul inside,
Gold in a glutton's eye will show—
So look alive, have a care,
Play fox, watch well how you set your snare!

But, Count, one other thing

Claims your reckoning:
You are at your best
In your purple crest,
Your braided breast,
Shoe-top shine, like a sleeping river
Glistens, yet shows not a quiver,
To make your bright side manifest;

Know thy Chick

Yet she looks deeper in you
Than your collar-flap view;
One look pierces clean through
Battalions of buttons—she blows
Your thistledown words aside like snows
In a south wind—somewhat more
You shall muster than pomp and snore
For her to tie to and adore.

But, Count—that love of yours!
You understand, of course,
How love is,
How it never aims to miss,
How one heart is wholly enough
To hold its heavenful of love,
Like as one drop of tiny dew
Captures a heavenful of view

To hold the picture up to you—
Well, Count, now to be plain:
Think not because she is small
There 's no soul in her at all!
One big body keeps a small soul,
Or 't' other way about,
Many a small body hoists a big soul,
To show you, past a doubt,

Whichever way you twitch the name,
Soul and body are not the same,
Nor are tied together, are not one,
Else how could such disparity be done?
Well, Count, this truth I charge
You take account of,
She has a spirit which is large
To such an amount of

Deep feeling for a friend,
 High thinking to accomplish an end
 As you by no thinking could comprehend!
 Yester evening I saw you prance
 About her as blue-flies dance
 For hunger about a quince
 Just to get the grab and mince,
 Never a look to the opal-tints,

For next I saw her gentle fan
 Brush you aside like a puff of bran!
 Why, Count, when you spoke of love
 Each word told her quite enough
 To prove you knew not the whisper of love!
 There 's your rival—watch him go
 Slyly to her, step-up slow,
 As if he never cared to know

If she loved him too, for see him demur,
 Scarce able by a step to stir
 So mighty is his love of her
 As not to have words to speak,
 While she will watch the checks in his cheek
 How they blink and caracole
 To sign to her of his joy or dole
 Like a cipher of the soul.

There he scarcely gives her one look,
 His eyes two volumes of a book
 She could read if once she saw
 What soul was couched in each of them
 As fire hides in a closeted gem—
 She knows his way of waiting for
 Evening to come, when he will not hide
 His soul he has or heart inside.

Know thy Chick

She knows he will never speak,
 She too never a word,
 Yet one day each will seek
 The other by lip and cheek
 And not a whisper to be heard—
 Soul's triumph—one may not array
 Love in language, there 's no way
 Great hearts may tell all they have to say.

So, Count, in order to eke
 More of you than tongue could speak
 There shall be soul behind the cheek,
 There shall be more of you
 Than a breath of sweet cachou,
 Boots and ribbons black and blue,
 Lamplight for an eye,
 Sham flight of a fly.

Shall I love another true
 If I have only myself in view?
 Much you shall think of to do
 To marshal paramount love in you.
 Look alive, have a care
 For what is noblest in you for fair!—
 There is love between those two,
 Hence I see no place for you!

COUNT

From your point of view
 I should think as you;
 Yet you lack a little knowing
 Would give you a better showing

Of your daughter—you think you know her,

Yet is there a little more

You might have seen, one weak point

Puts her queenliness out of joint,

To wit, her pack of vanity—

I 'll be plain with you, sire, you see,

Much as you have been with me—.

So I make my attack

Where she is weak, just for lack

Of love in me, as you said—

Having small heart I must use my head

If I would win her to love and wed.

An heiress and I need her gold,

A lover and I need her love—

I must play to be bold,

Just to win is enough

As this world goes, so I blink and bow,

So I smooth and chatter her

My cunning way to flatter her—

If I win, what matters how?

She is that you say she is,

Nature made her noble and true,

One I must not play to miss

Since nature made her fragile too

In this: with youth and her perfect heart

She 's not content, must pinken the cheek,

Coil her locks by cadgy art,

Blue her eye to make it speak

Less than soul has—pigment-tricks,

There the yellow fustic sticks,

Or pale powder by just a thrust

Against her side cheek, dust to dust—

Know thy Chick

So she plays her moth-wing rôle,
Turns attention away from soul—
Made was her heart to win,
Yet she rather would shine by curl and chin,

So that way 't was I caught her
One sweet evening between lights,
Paid such compliments to your daughter
As filled her with new delights,
Put her eyes dancing to drink and know
More of me who could value so
The pink in her and brow of a doll
And pheasant-flutter over her all.

I could talk by my knowledge-knack,
Having no heart to keep me back,
While he there, my rival bird,
So by the love in him was stirred
He could whisper never a word,
Till that way it happened that she
Gave her whole thought and whisper to me
And more too, as you shall see

When now I tell you this truth:
I 'm sure there is a place for me
Fast in her heart forsooth;
I 'm sure my rival is not to be
At her cheek and lip in place of me,
For I was destined to have my way
In this game of hearts by the hand I play—
I married your daughter yesterday!

RIVALS

THERE was my rival come from abroad,
 Approached me now like a crow-cock lord!
Such was his Satrap-way
 You would, if you saw him, say,
From his look of venomy,
 He took me for an enemy,
I who had lost my sting, drew a sigh
 At his mouth-malice and chop-axe eye.

He had not seen her for many a day,
 The girl who stood between us two,
So came now to have his way,
 To claim her and take her too!
What could I count by my belfry-head
 Against his gold, since also he knew
A way to have and to hold her too,
 In spite of me, as he said?

My tower-bell notes I could ring,
He would tumble his coin into chime
 So I should see how gold could sing
High over my bagpipe of rhyme!
 I was not handsome the man-like way,
Had small voice to make me heard
 In a sweet girl's heart where sun-stripes play
If a morning breeze is stirred.

“Since both may not have her,” he said,
“Let one of us die!

Better one should be dead
Than he see her lie,
Like a locket of charms,
In the other’s arms!

To the knife and fight it out,
Settle the thing by rule of rout,

“Put all title to her past a doubt!”
Nothing I said, so he took my way
Of silence for simple “yea,”
Pointed yonder, “There,” he said,
“Is the churchyard, your one place for the dead!
Whet your blade to split a hair,
Never another word to spare
And we ’ll fight it out in the churchyard there!”

Enough said, he led me over
One wide field of pink-top clover,
And now for certain and soon
Stood we there in the willow-plot,
Close by one little sorrow-dune
Smothered in forget-me-not—

“See, what a sweet flower,” I said,
“Lies here in this new garden-bed!”

“Brilla”—just that was all—
Her pretty name—each flower would say
“She only laid here the other day,
Soon we will follow her her new way,
Since soul is large, life is small”—
Each bird about, chebec or wren,
Repeats his song just to tell me plain
How all that is gone will come again.

My hand in his hand he took
His man-hearted way—
There was one unspoken look
Of a wound which has not a word to say
As thereso he held to my hand
—My loss his loss you understand—
Rivals no more, but more than all others
In the brotherless world we were brothers.

PRIEST AND SEQUELA

SEQUELA

COME away from there!
That chapel boxes in the air,
Boxes men up, roofs men under
So they may not catch the thunder
Nor see sight-light—come away
From their candle-stick altar-play
Of thumb and fee-work,
As if God melted at a knee-jerk,
Liked beggars, counted dimes,
Was flattered by your troop of chimes!
Certain or certain not,
What is it matters what
So I keep my master-thought,
So I keep myself wholly
Free of your dominion-folly?
You sought me out when I was a child,
When I knew not a way to know
I was meant to battle to grow
To mightiness mightily self-styled
And no part of you or your crotchets
For splitting kinks, flapping rochets.
Then was I the child squarely:
Did you play me honest-fairly
Your day you pinned me to your thought

I never would have thought save you
Held me to it, put me so

For one way I must climb to grow,
Nailed me to it, spit me through

As you tack a creeper to a wall
To lie there under your thumb and thrall?

Ah, but God gave me thought for growing
My own truth, my way for knowing

Truth, my truth, mine, mine—
There 's the thing in me most divine!

See there a strip of sun how it plies,
First at a chrysoprase for green,

Next at cinnamon-stone which flies
Crimson blood-royal sheen,

Each his own stripe and tongue
Of fire, each his own lip and lung!

My life, so far, I 've followed you
Your dreary weary round

Of clap-trap, onyx-camaieu
Finger-rig, your poor candle-clue

To truth, all you ever found
By rooting scarce a pinch above ground—

Candle-truth, candle-sighted,
And the candle not once lighted,

Careless you of the beautiful hour
Of wings, so you come to power

Over me, put me doing
Your way, your winking, thinking, chewing

Cheap chaff, drinking missal-stew
That I may come to snivel and mew,

That I may serve God by serving you!
I served my time—hold to that!

Perchance it is wholly well
I know the mix of your aludel,

Priest and Sequela

I know your scowl and caveat—
They point my truth I 'm driving at.

PRIEST

Yet is there God to serve, to fear!
That part you underlook;
Here it is written in a Book,
While what more, i' faith, is needed
That it should be heard and heeded?
Who may look out on the cold high clear
Of evening through the stars,
Where not an atom jars,
To know that there and here
Is death, that death is near
As the breath is of an hour?
Who may look out at eternal Power
For wonder and not a fear?
So, too, I may not swerve
From doom, man's doom to serve,
For see, he may not nod a thumb
But he serves a purpose, loud or dumb!
Service and fear—there are your kings
Whom you shall not once escape,
For they point the destiny of things,
For they shape you to their shape.
Who would be once without his fear,
One part of him as God made him,
Man's night-side, meant to shade him
So his star may look through and clear?

SEQUELA

I 've followed you the round round
Of whittled thought, knotted hands,

Till this much I have found
 For majesty in man: what he withstands,
 What he out-powers or commands
 Makes for Power in him, which is Beauty—
 There he wrestles with stiff duty,
 There he lies down to die
 God-fashion, never a sigh,
 His star-soul like a sheet of sky
 For everlasting clear—
 While what do you rule by your lip of fear?
 Service, say you—there 's God to serve—
 As if the vast God could deserve,
 Could have one atom of one desire
 More than I make from high to higher
 By serving, not Him, thus humanly,
 But by serving the voice of power in me!
 God is power of Beauty, Beauty of power,
 While there 's not for you to try to please it
 Save by reaching to try to seize it
 Somewhat in your life of an hour.
 Power is about me and anenst
 For me to put myself against
 By might of virtue, by hard endurance,
 Self-sustained, self-assurance,
 I, just the one man I
 Alone for what is sovereignty,
 Which puts all power to coddling me.
 Against me is power, all ways I turn,
 From sea-spout to sky supern
 Whose gold eye-balls spit and burn.
 Man is here his day and gone,
 While not out of the winking dawn
 Is Power he was meant to lean upon
 More than yonder flower which will rise,

'Twixt storm and scorch, to pluck one lip
 Out of yonder scarlet skies,
 Hold the dawn-pink in its grip.

PRIEST

You know the weakness of man,
 What nothing he may span
 By contrast with sun or planet-flower,
 What no-time is his life in him,
 How his light feeble down to dim
 By contrast with one eternal hour!
 Power is above him, is beyond,
 Is against him, he under bond
 To kneel to it, kneel he must
 To his final defeat which is death,
 Give his heart up and lust of breath,
 So is he moulded to kneel, to trust,
 To look up, to knuckle down
 Under rulership and frown
 To win God for better, for worse,
 Swallow this life-lot like a curse—
 There 's the heel-stamp of the universe!

SEQUELA

So! Yet was one man I knew once,
 The man knocked out of him when a child,
 Was put to practising dupe and dunce,
 Was taught it was manlier to be mild
 And prayerful—he should be prince
 Of power by knowing how to wince
 The worm-way, he should stoop
 To please God, copy chicken-droop,
 Whimper, whine, snivel
 For cheap luck between God and Devil.

So they put him, now he was young,
 To fetch scarce a wrinkle in his tongue,
 To his knees—he should learn how
 To wheedle, to thumb and bow,
 He should learn to put up each palm
 To keep sky off, pipe a sigh in psalm
 To save his gizzard from crop of harm.
 So he stooped while he grew,
 So he grew stoop, soon scarce knew
 If he was double or bent in two.
 Came his day when he awoke,
 When he tried to straighten,
 When he tried to greaten
 And could not, for there his back was broke.
 Against man is Power in the universe,
 He here for better or for worse
 To clinch with it and not yield
 'Though he lose his grip, his field;
 Power against him, he against Power
 To bring him to shape and size
 Above this clay-model of an hour,
 To force him by counterforce to rise
 A thumb higher—there are his skies
 Above always and beyond
 What he may comprehend,
 Yet is there in him that which is fond
 Of knowing there shall be no end
 Of anything, primely of him
 With his acrobat-heart, ego-vim.
 You have I followed, just you
 I bowed and listened to
 To learn of what is true,
 You for master, I to follow,
 I all gullet, I all swallow,

You for prisoner, you bound
 To me like pebbles to their ground—
Comes this truth out to each reasoner,
 He who prisons is a prisoner.
I and you are bound together
 By law-links, toggle-knots of truth,
Your cold way of "why," of "whether,"
 Not once one warm soul of youth
To tie us—you was to school me
 To your thinking so to rule me,
While there now I snapped the link,
 Am free again, dare to think,
Yet I would not be free of you!
 Who in the world would be free of love,
His sky where his starlight grew,
 His other self he is coming to
High over him, always so far above
 As to prove him this life is not enough,
Proof there 's no kingdoming like love?
 You sought to rule me by thumb and writ;
I saw the feebleness of it,
 The littleness of what you knew
For truth, never an atom true,
 Save that my soul was all love of you.

There now it was May!
 It was one sky-wonder day
In sun-fields where they took their way,
 Like lovers do, took not a thought
Of "why," of "wherefore-whether,"
 Knew just that they were one together,
That the what-of-it mattered not,
 Save that their thinking was bosom-wrought

Of May-pink and love and sun
 And their young joy-life just begun.
 Priest and Priestess, they took their way!
 What nothing he had to say
 Now love had him, put him stalking,
 Showed him his soul, stopped his talking,
 Brought him squarely to his knees
 For love just, never a God to please!
 Psalmody, creed-work, or doubt
 Was small matter, was crowded out
 Of the heart of him—there he stood
 In his new kingdom-of-heaven mood,
 All love, all master, and all good,
 For now he drew her to him to say
 Love was best, he would go her way
 Of righteousness which was greater
 Than churchery or any worship-way
 Which littles to subordinate man
 Because God is God on his higher plan,
 Since man will come along later
 To be God too, to gather power
 To compass a cycle in an hour
 By great-heartedness, keen love,
 Endurance which outwearies Hell,
 Sings Night is on, sings all is well—
 There 's the God in him all enough!
 Right in the best of their sunfield walk
 He drew a day-lily from its stalk,
 Put it in her soulfullest hand
 Which held him so at her command,
 That she might wholly understand
 His heart was there too, like the flower
 To follow her where she went,
 Her way, her supremest bent

Priest and Sequela

Above altars, only for love—
 Drew her to him again
As a maple draws stars and rain
 Out of heaven down to each lip
To get the yellow and silver drip—
 So she held him, too, and close
As a bee in the lapwings of a rose—
 There they were so in soul and mind
As to leave all else behind
 Save love, just the greatness of love—
There was their best and all enough!
 Then this thought in him began to grow:
I am more than the thing I know,
 I am more than the way I go.

GREATNESS

GUNS to their booming
For you that are you,
 That are great,
 That can do
 The foredooming
 Of fate
To rise to be vast vicegerent of state!

Fires to their leaping
For you that were born
 To the hour
 To be sworn
 To the reaping
 Of Power
To be topmost masterful man of the hour!

Flags to their streaming
For you that were grown
 To make might
 Of a throne
 By your scheming
 To fight
For place with the stars to look down from their height.

Bells to their clinking
For you that have brain
 To turn loss
 Into gain,
 To go thinking
 New cause
For greatness to capture a world's applause!

Cups to their draining
For you that have skill
 To bend men
 To your will
 By your reigning
 To chain
All thought to your thought by a God's domain!

Tears to their streaming
For one who could make
 Life a loss
 For truth's sake
 By addeeming
 His cross
One true tree of life for no kind of loss!

Hearts to their clapping
For him who shall tower
 Above mind,
 Above Power
 Or mishapping
 To find
Great greatness is just to be true and kind!

EUNICE AND I

LET me tell you, my friend,
This life is short,
Comes to one soon and sudden end
Whether you swallow the truth or not,
And men are never satisfied
As men have lived and died.

Soul is larger than any thought,
Makes for more than men have sought
Or time has wrought,
Is so large as to never complain
Because the limit is this brain
Which looks and snaps and is gone again.

There 's this pumping at my wrist,
There 's this breath which comes and goes
After giving the tongue a twist
And I am feeling my way with toes
And tentacles, as the gum-fly does—
Soul is above such trick and fuss,

For I am looking at the skies
To wonder what is out beyond;
I wonder if the moon is wise,
Or only tramp and vagabond,
While I puff and wonder
At each boom of thunder,

Eunice and I

Yet always I look beyond,
I see the suns are under bond,
I know I would not be there
Bound as they are to blink and stare,
To keep one way, hold my lip,
Give a universe the slip—

And so I think, the while my toes
Carry me, my diaphragm goes,
Heart kicks, bellows blows,
—How they do it God only knows—
I am not of them, I am out there
Where comets climb the silver stair.

So by this lamplight night I sit,
Eunice is by me,
We two are thinking of it,
Thinking how the gadflies try me,
How we must eat and snuff and pinch
And this life short as a niggard inch

And going, so we let it go—
What if each perfect point be a sting,
What if all earth be undertoe,
Yet will I toss my bell and wing
For flight and summer carolling
And let the worm-world go.

Hand in hand are we together
In this perfect weather
Of the moon
To think of one vast forever,
Of such a night of noon
Which is gone so soon

Because it comes again,
Comes with the same gold feet
To dance in my dew-field or village street,
Pelts fire at the rain,
Drops its yellow tunis
On my perfect Eunice.

A troupiat ducked in his tree
As if he would dart away
Beyond what he could see
Into his galaxy day
So vast as to go unsaid,
Like a rain of worlds overhead;

Then the one look to his mate—
She is there with her little young
Where the emerald flowers are hung
And he is fastened—he must wait,
Give his heart up, serve out his term,
Juggle for the crumb and worm.

He is tied to his tree
Just as we;
Yet he knows he shall fly
One day, pinnacle high;
So let him splutter and pick
For life—there 's soul in the trick!

Hand in hand, Eunice and I,
Nought in life could unheart us
And we looking in the infinite sky
To find no death there—what shall part us
When nothing stops or is gone
So I know soul plunges on and on?

So we come down to little things,
 To life, which is short,
To know how somehow out of it springs
 Soul which is born and wrought
To be great and mastrous and fond,
 Always to look to one big beyond.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

EVERY little life to its own sweet life!
Dispute me that!
Say your way is about the best
For life for you to be coming at
So you reap joy—devil take the rest!
Let slip the knife!
Your petronel on a storm-plover
For joy to you
That you split him through
To topple what little sky-shine over
He tried to swallow,
Leave him there dark and cold and hollow!
Blaze your blunderbuss at a moose
To stuff his heart with winters,
Knock his nostrils into splinters
To let soul out of him, stop use
And life and Beauty, give him death—
Why should he pull a suck of breath?
A yaffingale in a knot of apple
For one drink of juice
To put parch out, stay his thrapple,
And just because you choose
You pin him there, shower-shotted
Where his apple-branch is knotted
Like defiance to you, and you listen—
I could see your eye-laugh glisten

Thou Shalt Not Kill

Now he dropped his pretty monody
And you caught what low last swanody
Was his as it died away
To tickle your hell-heart and panther-play.
A thrasher waltzes from bough to bough,
You know the hop of him and how,
But for you, he would be hopping now
In his small forest of phillyrea
To such heart-loaded hysteria
Of joy I would think his trees
Were bugles—then next came you
Whom neither his song nor dance could please,
So you bored his lemon bosom through—
Even now, years after, I hear
His last ripple just, kind and clear,
Singing forgiveness to such as you.
A meadow-mink looked to the sun
To wonder, now day was done,
What swamp-apple or moorberry she might
Fetch her little ones over night
As there she stood against the sun,
While there you came with your leopard-foot
And aimed, as if God's love might run
Out of the thrapple of a gun—
Now is the air as the stars are mute,
And she comes no more where her little brood
Waited for the mother-mood
Which means all heaven-given good—
Ah, I see, God made her hide
Fur-coated to tuck you safe inside,
You for pet best, you must be warm
To suckle sweet, to gather power
To lie like dew does in a flower,
And her brood may wither in the storm!

Surroyal stag, strike him under,
Since there could be never blunder
In a universe which is God's,
In a game of souls and sods:
There he stands, such kind-like eye
Turned to you I would think a man
Could sooner choose to die
Than crush his face. Ah, but your plan
Of joy comes, of course, first best,
As I said, devil take the rest
At all cost to a scarlet ibis
So you track him to where his tribe is
To drink his blood, wear his wing,
Nor mind the red riot of the thing.
So there 's your best—so you must kill
For joy only to tear off the features
Of God's beautifullest Beauty-creatures
To delight you, nor count the ill;
Being man at it were small matter
So you jump to laugh and chatter—
Being man at it could scarce count,
Since leaps of joy make paramount.
Which were nobler, that you drink wind
Just to laugh a bit, have your day
At sun licks, porgy-play
To dilate so you may say
How in your time you snarled and grinned,
Or conscience-like and in God's name
Let others, His others, do the same?
Being man at it is all
You 'll get out of it, vast or small,
Since all a man may do
Is what he may give for kind, for true,
To know how killing makes not a part

Thou Shalt Not Kill

Of his own gentle heart
And he yield to it, keep his way
Straight where the master fine feelings play.
Life for just life lives on life, but oh,
Who is there lives and loves it so?
Being man at it is to care
For Beauty in the thin white air
And out of it, Beauty which is true
Of what is first in the heart of you;
Being man at it is to care
Only for what is fair,
Nor mind your worm-world there
Nor what rules in it, nor how men say
"God made us, let God have his way,"
Since being man at it is to know
Better 's to come to, ever so,
And no completion and no rest,
Nor place in the universe for best.
Being man at it is to strike
Against what is hideous-like
To spare the singing morning shriek,
Since more are you than this body-dike
Through which, whatever much you seek,
Soul gets scarce a chance to peek.
Man at it—there 's the ring
Puts space out, gathers wing
To circum-circle everything.

LOST AND FOUND

OVER beyond by my garden-wall,
 Just where
Sun brushes against garden-pear,
 Best of all
Was a chance that I might find her there,
 My garden-girl, and she
Watching, perchance, for a look from me;

Or under her basswood bough
 To sit
To weave her thought as moonbeams knit—
 Everyhow
I did my most to fancy her knitting
 A thought of me now
Where her swifts were flitting;

Over the edge of her meadow-brook
 I thought
I could see her there as if she sought
 To have one look
Deep in the water which would not blur
 Her image by a little stir,
To find me there cheek to cheek with her;

Down my long little alley-path
 High in phlox
Which pointed straight to her sun-red rocks
 In aftermath

I looked to see if she could be waiting
Where sheep and field were separating
Now the grasses and the stars were mating;

Or high up in the hills above
I looked,
Where sun-down in green gold leaf is booked,
To find my love—
Neither was she there when I
Could hear the tired wind heave a sigh—
Could she be beyond in yonder sky?

For now so soon ago
I found
Her here and there through my blossom-ground
And perfect so
I scarce knew a way to tell
Her cheek from pear or pimpernel—
Do I gather now only asphodel?

Yesterday just it seemed she stood
By the lake
To hear her birds their sky-way wake
Each underwood—
Is it so now, with all my care,
I look for her each new noonday there
To find she is no more anywhere?

Right as one day I looked to see
If she could hide
By her grapevine wall, on the sunny side,
If she could be
Somewhere in playful hiding from me,
Sudden there came the old throb and start
Where I found her—deep in my deepest heart.

SPIRIT

I

WHAT a peaceful way I look at things
Now by the drop of an evening sky
Where the crow fetches, siskin sings,
And I go listening by,
Or I stop to look
If more be not there than my thinking took;

II

For, right when he stopped to stroke his wing
Across a leaf where the dew was clear,
His brother-mate in the branches near
Caught up the note, begun to sing
As I looked to try to see
How such sireny could be.

III

The song was there in my heart at least,
As much as rang in my two fine birds—
We three now there cupped at our feast
Of silver bells for words
As this was the truth they told:
All three of us truly are single-souled;

Spirit

IV

For are we not different, each of us three
From the other two, each his own throat
And lip, yet there is the unique note
The same in them as it is in me?
How to reason, on the whole,
Save we are one singing longing soul?

V

Do I not look, as do you and you,
Each by his own proper eye and head,
To capture the rounded crown of blue,
Find knopweed purple, poppy red?
So whatso for an eye I claim,
Red runs red to all men all the same.

VI

There floats my moon on the water-breast
For you and me, and we take it in,
Each by an eye of another kin,
For the same gold streak—there's my test
To show how, foot and nowl,
All men make part of one parent soul.

VII

Are we not, then, getting together,
More and more of each heart to each heart?
Think if the crop-throat or silver feather
Be not the thing that keeps us apart!
Think how I may not see
My love, but only her imagery

VIII

As there she comes and I know her not
 By what I may see to touch or hear,
 But only deep in my silent thought
 Is the heart in her so vast and clear
 As truth, which does not err,
 As soul, which I divide with her.

IX

Each being so that we both must miss
 Each other because the lip is there
 And shoulder-shape and elbow-snare,
 Because love is parted by a kiss,
 Do I not come to know
 Souls get together by what they grow

X

Of power to weary this flesh away,
 To wear the shin out and finger-nibs,
 Beat back this conqueror-clay
 To go free of a cage of prison-ribs?
 One soul for all—so I say
 We part to get nearer together one day.

XI

So come away, dear, to my overflow-field
 Of mew and yellowest sunflower yield
 To trap a globird, to question not
 How you are trapped by his silver knot;
 Hand in my hand to go,
 Let us tap the chimes the yew-birds know;

XII

Let us link our souls to the blossom-wind
Which tracks, first a lily, then a fern
Till all the sweetness be snared and pinned
To be caught up into sky supern,
One wind, yet many sweets,
Each tied to each by a wind of cleats,

XIII

By a wind which grew them to give them life,
Cuffed each stalk till it stood straight up,
Put storm to the flower for elbow-strife
To give it a zip and pretty cup
Of fragrancy worth taking
Above mud-lap and mere flower-making.

XIV

That way I fairly fancy I know
Soul is—one universal sea
Of Power to come this way and go,
Having made the most of you and me
To waft us on our way
To new other kinds of field and day.

XV

As wholly deep in your eyes I read,
As deep in the talking stars I look,
Nought is there save one scanty screed,
Or loose type, not the printed book;
Just as each longing kiss
Stops at the lips—the soul I miss.

XVI

The blue long vein of elbow-breach
 Or July cheek are between us two,
 Each holds the other out of reach
 And I have only the least of you;
 Each one to his tether!
 Lo, we must die to get together!

XVII

So come away, dear, have not a care,
 Life is short because soul is fair
 Which waits for us in the yonder there!
 Away to my meadow of flowers,
 Away on the wings of the hours,
 Life is so short because soul is so fair.

WAITING

At her gate,
Now the hour was late—
It was such an afternoon
As puts the thought of a man in tune—
At her gate I was leaning only to say
All I had said in another way
Many times on many a day
Of just such a boon
Of afternoon.

Said I so:
I come and I go,
My whole tale of love you know,
Yet have you been counselling the years
To bear my hopes off, but to leave me my fears,
Have kept me waiting only to say
You might think of me one day
Of another year
Away from here.

So I said,
That last day I stood
Where your columbine was red
And I was pale as your satin snood,
So I said I could wait, for I knew beside
How nought in the world has ever died,
Knew, too, there would come a day,
Not so far away,
When you would say

I was right
To keep to my way
Of uppermost spirit-light
Nor hark to what the world had to say!
You saw I was true to my soul-shapen thoughts,
I piqued your world of gravies and pots,
Tongue-licks of leatherly sots
Who dig to make room
In pit and doom.

Your one thought
From morning to noon
Was how the world could be bought,
Was how you could spin a rigadoon,
Train a bonnet to sprout like a garden-plot,
Fly to a needle to point you great,
Any man most for a mate
So he loved in you
The swish and blue.

You were young,
So I saw at start,
Easily everyway swung
Beyond the paddock of soul and heart
To jump your way in the world like a filly
In a rye-patch, fly loose and silly,
Bounding only to be caught,
And it mattered not
The end you wrought.

Yet I said:
I hold to my view,
And whether living or dead,
I put my trust in the soul in you—

Waiting

For underneath it all were for me to see
Tricks and fingers of Divinity
Working for what or what not
So that power be caught,
Soul be wrought.

You were young,
Life crouched for a leap
Of joy just to sow and reap
The pigeon-pleasures of lip and tongue,
While I was well along on the road ahead,
Such things for me were crippled or dead—
Is it, then, mere flesh instead
Shall hold us apart
In soul and heart?

That last day
I stood in your gate
I loved you my honest way,
And love is never early nor late,
And I love you now as I loved you then,
'Though I am come to another land
Of other ways, different men
To understand
Than I knew then.

Once in life,
As I meant it then,
I was to see you again,
And you were to be my perfect wife—
That last summer day when I stood in your gate,
Saw you beginning to hesitate,
How could I have guessed it then,
My lot among men
Never again

To see you
As I saw you there
In sun-rings and amber hair
And eyes as a heaven of endless blue
Trying in vain to match heavenly looks with you,
I for never once and nevermore
To have you so as before,
To know you again
As there and then.

Once I went
My way from your gate
It was as if I were sent
To get the clutch of an ugly fate,
While now I can see the thing all as it is,
Nothing once ever made to miss
Which soul wants—and I want you
For best and for true
And forever too.

Now I know
Your love of me so,
For yonder there where they laid
My poor part down in the willow-shade
I saw you how softly you knelt and stayed,
Dropping your bay-leaves and gentle tears
Where the moon looks, kildee hears,
Where the night-sweet leaks,
Bobolink peeks.

Now I know
Tears are not to shed
Just because you saw me go,
So thought I was lost and surely dead!

Waiting

What in the galaxy-fields is to fear
When a whole sun is tucked in a tear,
One skyful never the whole
Of a single soul
Of joy and dole?

So you grew,
And I never think
How the world will go with you
And life but a puff and thistle's wink,
For there is your purposeful destiny
To make for power to come unto me,
While I am waiting for you,
As the sky-worlds do,
In gold and blue.

A SKY WORD

HER hand, tangled now in my hair
As I lay at her train,
Reached to clutch at a care
Which tapped sharp at my brain,
Till one half-closed eyelid of the blind
Let dark slip out—the moon behind
Struck the floor
As before.

I lay in her train at her feet,
Put these hands to her face
Which I held—love is never complete—
For a look of her grace,
Held her face in two hands, held it fast
Till this throb of my brain should be past—
Would the moon
Leave us soon?

Her hair poured down to her shoulder-edge,
Bounded off and fell
Like a cataract over a marble ledge
Till I bathed in the swell
Where it tumbled to rumble about,
Where it splashed to dash at a doubt
Which held fast
To her past.

A Sky Word

The Count was a handsome man at most;
 Rapped the flags with his stick
To make conversation—no time lost,
 Flags answer quick;
Decked like a sheldrake, plume in crest;
Fine legs, round legs, all legs at his best,
 Was the plan
 Of the man.

Women he knew, all women he knew;
 Man-minded or weak
Could want for no master—he would do,
 He had only to speak;
She should obey him, love his command,
Coo to wince like a squab in his hand
 Which pants
 At a glance.

Women long for a master, he said,
 One to fear and hate,
To follow after if love be dead,
 A strong arm for a mate;
Kind at times only—they understand
Who pin their souls to an iron hand!
 So he schooled
 As he ruled.

She was the slave of him first to last
 To each nod of his will;
He was the shadow against her past
 As it elbowed her still,
Saying: See you make him love you,
The boy there who flutters above you!
 Clip his wings
 As he sings.

And so on—so galloped care in my brain
As I lay at her feet
Shrinking for thinking what 's to gain
'Though her promise be sweet!
How should I trust her?—the Count was there—
—Her hand was his hand stroking my hair—
Every whim
Was of him.

Idle fool-fears—the spell was cold
He cast about her;
My crop of faith was young, was bold,
Too large to doubt her;
Her love, too, would kindle in return
—Earth once ablaze and the sky will burn—
And be true,
That I knew.

One wondrous portrait hung at her wall,
A face full of care;
The rut of the mind-moth was over it all,
Whole hell-pits were there;
Such face so young, so full of care
Soul seemed to go and come again there
In its stall
In the wall.

The eyes stood bounden to look at space
From soul which was gone;
Death dropped a white veil over the face,
White as sky is at dawn;
One round small spot at the temple said
Soul too is white 'though the heart be red
To a streak
Down the cheek.

A Sky Word

Poor boy, she lassoed him as well
Till he writhed in her noose,
While the Count tipped a light on the way to hell
For the sweet lad to choose
To end his sentence of life unsaid
By one small deep period, round and red.
Folly drops
Where it stops.

True—but he was of small amount
To play great at such game;
Knew not the trick to supplant the Count,
To snuff out the flame;
There 's danger to play where souls are odds,
For then a man must deal to the Gods,
Take a stand,
Show his hand.

Her rug at her feet lay thin and old
Till the moon's small beams
New-knit it into a cloth of gold,
One end of her dreams;
The Count was poor, the place was old
Till my moon now spread out her lap of gold
For a thought
To be caught.

Night's high queen grew pale, now dawn
Made signs of a sun,
Her rival foe in a fight for morn
Since Heaven begun,
Let drop one snow-light out of a cloud—
Now turned the red rug white as a shroud
Lately spread
For the dead.

Gold in a shroud!—a word out of skies:

Be man once again,

For there your top of endeavor lies:

All profit is vain.

Well—daylight swept up my dark once more;

There I lay at her train on the floor;

But the care

Was not there.

You may have her, Count, with all your might;

Your trick failed to work;

I slipped my neck from your noose to-night,

So put up your dirk!

But I shall have left my heart with her,

My only way I could part with her—

There 's the shame

Of the game!

WORSHIP *VERSUS* LOVE

I KNEEL at the lavender lap
Of my love this day
In a crouching way,
Catch at her glove and satin wrap,
Much as to say:
"You are better than I in a spirit-way,
Noble far more, stronger heart
And majesty, yet my counterpart.

"So I look up—instead
Of neck-stiff I bend the head
As you see me now—
There 's my alder-bough
Nods at the sun to show me how—
Fully am I content
To press my lips where the arm is bent
For very worshipful wonderment.

"Here at my knees
My heart to fill, my Goddess to please,
And what has this pie-life more than these?
Do I not know
You love it and God wants it so
That I shall bend my knee
To Power so I come to be
Slavish cub-truckling subserviency?"

Not to stop there, I took
 Wider range, loftier look
 Straight to where
 In mountain sweep of emerald air
 I could build temple to her there
 Of sky-roof and copper flower
 Of magic-handed Thessaly,
 So she should hearken royally
 To my praise of her belle-perfect power.

Up I clomb in my mountain high,
 Just under the sky,
 Collared my pines
 In columbines,
 Knitted my pillar-bars
 Of the shooting stars,
 Built me my altar there
 Of crowfoot stair,

 Of corchorus, pimpernels—
 Anemone I hung for bells,
 Thistles for their honey-cells—
 'Round the crystal rock
 Flew fire-crest and hollyhock—
 In among the bays
 I tuned my lays
 Till the jay joined in and rang his praise.

There she should hark to gaze
 At Vesper-hour
 To my altar-praise
 Of her gentle power,
 Of her lilac-ways—

Worship *versus* Love

There I should bend the knee
For prayer and glee
To hold her high and to smallen me.

Am I not right, not wise
To make of me any sacrifice
To draw love out of her closet-eyes?
Shall a man do less
Than humble him before almightiness?
Has he another choice
Now Aphrodite lifts her voice
To put his heart bounding to rejoice?

So as I got my altar fixed,
Lilac and swallow and jasper mixed,
There I tempted her up
To listen to my altar-song,
Pass me my humble-cup,
See me bend to belong
To her, watch me worship and snivel
To show the slavishness of a weevil.

"Ah no, not so," she said,
"Never you bend knee or head
Or man-shape which is you—
Heart up, head up too!
Nought of a man is fair,
What love soever he may share,
If the king in him be not there—
Hold to the man and most in you!

"Think you I like
The homage of a shrike
And not his master-song
He pipes for sweet and strong,

Never a note of right or wrong
 Or duty,
 Only his love of Beauty
 The fine day long?

"Think you you put me great
 Or higher
 By so much as you underrate
 Your own masterful desire
 For self-made self-supremacy
 Of power to do, to be,
 And not an upward look to me?
 Blow you the breath of charm
 In your psalming qualm?

"Is it an atom true
 Man is noblest to limp and cringe?
 Am I to fatten on your twinge,
 Lord-Goddess it over you?
 Have a thought of this:
 Power was never meant to miss;
 Have a hand at it too
 To pocket Power—there 's the God in you!

"As for me, your love
 Is worship enough;
 As for you,
 Your royallest plan
 Is that you be man
 Unmastered, independent-true
 To your own cop-top loftiness,
 Be the might of it more or less.

“As for your worship—
Knee-kink, twisted lip,
 Folded palm,
 Cold-minded shalm,
 Cold-hearted psalm—
Pace the sun-spaces through,
What worship of a Kickapoo
Like your love of me and my love of you?”

SPIRIT BEAUTY

THERE 's a Beauty comes and goes
Twice as fine
As the perfume of the snows,
As heart-beats of a vine,
Like a cunning other sense
So I may not tell from whence
The blessing blows,
Only this,
The sign was never meant to miss,
Sweet as a breath of Salamis.

Yonder in drowsy hill
Where the bubble-play
And virelay
Of vireo are still,
Yonder I look to see
What early morning threnody
Once was there,
Swallows in chuckling air,
Sheep without a keeper's care,
As comes to me

My thought of their pretty days
Long ago,
Their song-bush and pigeon-ways,
Pipe-up in copper glow—

Spirit Beauty

There I saw them pitch and dance,
 Take their turn at lofty chance,
 And now I know,
 As I think,
 I see them at yonder river-brink,
 Thrush and peep and meadowink—

 Another river,
 Nought I saw or thought of ever—
 Quamoclit, quince blossom
 Shot new other surcles,
 Witchwolf, opossum
 Knit moon-leaves into circles,
 Breathed new cerulean fire
 To quench their soul-desire,
 And I thought
 Not what *is* there, but what is there *not*?

There 's a Beauty comes and goes
 Like a thought,
 And I wonder if it grows
 In another garden-plot
 Than the garden once I knew
 Where I wondered, as I grew,
 What an amaranthus shows,
 If it brings
 Messages of finer things
 Where deeper Beauty sports and sings,

For theresoe as a boy
 I knew an elegant pea-flower stalk
 To tuck a bud up to decoy
 My heart to tune and talk—

Now are daffodil
 And yellow other flowers,
 Yet, odd enough, right by me still
 Through heavy-minded hours
 Springs my pea-flower now to train
 And rollick in my heart again.

Just so as happy boy
 I could see
 Each green cheek of pomeroiy
 Or treacle of a bee
 Was all the world to be got,
 Or I should have missed my lot—
 Yet stays now this one joy
 Fast in me:
 Gone are they all, Nonesuch and bee,
 Yet left their sweet in the soul of me.

I think that he is gone,
 My friend there of hope and doubt,
 Because I see him no more about
 By evening, by belamy dawn—
 Soon my heart begins to tick
 To mind me he is there
 In the spirit-quick
 For lasting fair
 Like nothing he could have been
 In pulp and spleen.

Once I saw a meadow
 Play with moon and shadow
 Which danced about one tulip-tree
 So their gilded feet were sent
 Helter-skelter-fully bent
 On black and yellow symmetry

Spirit Beauty

Like bees in honey-cells to cheat
Sassafras-field of every sweet—
How now just one homing bee
Brings my lost meadowsweet back to me!

Far over the hills I look
 And I see
Horizon-sky like an open book
As I wonder what can be
Onward in such endless thence,
Or I dream of where and whence
 Soul comes, while I look
 And I see
Surely one little place for me
In yonder bright bold eternity,

For, now I look within,
 I see
More than chance, more than cherubin,
No such thing as all of me,
Nor one final consummate feat
Where I am done, where soul is complete—
 So now once more
 I will say
Soul takes one boundless Beauty-way,
Always another other day

Of silver wing in sycamore,
 I the autumn-spring
Of endless new other blossoming
 Forevermore.
So comes there straight unto me,
When Power about tries to undo me,
A breath of endless Beauty through me

To show
Spirit hovers to come and go
The same way so.

There 's the Beauty comes and goes
Twice as fine
As the perfume of the snows—
Who is there to divine
How it comes, why it goes?
Wiser he who never knows,
Save only how
Here and now
Lightly should rest your care
When Beauty is everything everywhere.

CLASPING THE ROSES

HERE was a man in a garden fell,
Too much clasping of roses there;
A last thing I heard was the tap of his knell
At the village bell;
What will you say, shall his sepulchre close
On the blood-spotted rose?

Here was a hall in a castle bright,
Torches flashed to one last pale end,
Mottled the walls in yellow and white
Through shadows to blight
Red-spattered spots on pillars of gold—
Love was bought there and sold.

Carnival night and moons were out,
As many moons in the dome as suns;
Each maid kept her hero-boy about
To play guard or scout;
Straight knights in steel armor of mirror-sides
To glass-prison their brides.

Top of a hill their castle ran out
In rills of music, over a plain,
Each waked-up meadowink caught in rout
To scatter about—
The best of bassoon and drums was gone,
Yet the dancing went on.

Each maid a white rose wore at her breast
To speak such silence as she would have kept
Who gave her word, her soul and the rest
 To her one man best;
How quick a maid's heart drops out of sight
 And you mention her knight!

Out to the banquet-hall in a wing
Of his wild-eyed castle snapping fire
The Duke sailed forth with each rose and its sting
 To stand in a ring
Of all the sweet girls snuggled about—
 Their knights were left out.

To their round white arms from elbow up
He drank; drank to their locks, their lips,
Tempted them now to double their sup
 From his own gold cup
Till the red old wine with its fine old freaks
 Put its palms to their cheeks.

The Duke took hint to follow suit,
Kissed and clasped them close to his neck,
Where he reveled to reel to wine and lute—
 The castle was mute,
Till one hundred knights hurled their spears at his door—
 They could harken no more.

So said the Duke to them, boldly said:
Which of you now will become my bride?
For mark, ere another sun I shall wed,
 Or dream with the dead;
There their bold battle-axe clicks at the gate,
 And the hour is late!

Clasping the Roses

Quick speak—which of you gives her hand?
She who speaks first shall be all my queen;
Am I not almighty Duke in the land?

She too shall be grand.

I love you all, so will wed her on sight
Who abandons her knight.

Quick flew one fairest out of the flock
To pick a nest at the Duke's right side
To whisper "Only a vine 'round a rock,
And they all may mock,
But I will wed thee this very night
To be Duchess by right!"

Nor sooner said than the steel great gate
Burst open where one spit gave way
To one hundred and one men of war, of fate
Which is never late—
Knights of new swords flashed thirsting to thrust
A Duke's blood into rust.

The Duke cuffed swords with her honest knight
Till two long blades rang from pit to dome,
Sputtered fire to match stars with such ill-starred night,
Spit blood left and right—
Only she remained to lower the Duke's head,
Who was left to the dead.

She too must go; such burden was great;
Too great to bear in the long round run,
For between her two men she lost a mate,
Tricked her own fate,
So fell on the Duke's sword, went his way;
So much guilt could not stay.

Here was a man in a garden fell,
Too much clasping of roses there;
A last thing I heard was the tap of his knell
 At the village bell;
What will you say, shall his sepulchre close
 On the blood-spotted rose?

Here was a rose in a garden cropped,
Bent its white lip to the white cold hand;
A last thing I saw was the stem where it stopped,
 The grave where it dropped;
Like follows like as the hour-sands close
 O'er the man and the rose.

SEMPER SUPRA

I

KEEP a hand at it to putter
To fish moons out of a gutter—
Nose at an atom to see
If the thing be not
Just the thing you thought,
A twist of pulp and alchemy—
Poke in a mud-worm's eye
To see if soul must die,
If thinking and bosom squirm
In the gut-works of a worm!
For me the round blue vault
Of picture for not a fault—
As for your wormy pistareen
Postmortem of a carrageen
To see if God has a knee or spleen,
Better you call a halt
To have one look to the planet-vault
In lemon and red,
Put like a crown on you overhead,
So far, so fair, you know
God's in the moons whether or no
You prick at a star to prove it so.

II

Cast an eye at yonder stork
To see how he grew a feather

To put battle to any weather—
 Look now to the auk,
Find how he forgot to walk,
 Forgot to fly, so lost his wing
And perished in the polar spring—
 See if the beetle-fly could size
An atom with his thousand eyes
 To get a paltry atom wise—
Better by much I knew
 A way to look the spaces through
Into eternal beautiful blue
 Than I thresh at pigmy-work with you.

III

Rip up the diaphragm of a miller,
 You blood and Beauty-spiller,
Have a care to fork his nose,
 Play microscopy at his toes
To see how spirit balks and goes—
 Spit his ribs, tap his back
To get a hand in at the knack
 Of finding out what God may lack—
For me, give me his wing
 Of London-smoke-red frescoing
To fly to show his opal ring.

IV

Strip a rain-wrasse of his hide
And his pretty pride
 To see if under his skin
A little mind-light squeezeth in—
 Stick to your trick of doubt,
Never you look about

For his pink spots in thistle-blue
 Looking like all eyes to you
 That would darken and split him through,
 Most as my little Alley-Bub
 Who tires of his rub-a-dub,
 So snaps the snares, breaks his drum
 To know where the music bubbles from.

v

Send one look to the roundabout
 Hemisphere of gifted light:
 There 's blue for you as well as sight—
 Why rush you in to doubt,
 To put the Beauty in it to rout
 For sake only of finding out
 If God is or God is n't
 To be handicapped or prisoned?
 There 's such warmth waiting there
 In the caressing air,
 Perfume of sun and flower
 In each tapestried hour,
 Memory of every past
 Which holds you fast,
 The one fine face of the lost fine friend
 Cheek to cheek with you till the end,
 Your lilac-branch which drops you pearls
 Rounded as Orion curls,
 All for you, you the fountain-spring
 'Round which swift and lintie sing
 To silver and dip their wing—
 Have not a care if you may not know
 How pill-corn and poppy blow,
 You the masterfullest thing

'Round which all the bold worlds swing
For you to capture on the wing!—
Keats knew it and told you so,
Beauty is all ye need to know.

DOLLAR-FOOT FARM

CROP-AUTUMN time was then
At Farmville,
Each old mill
Was new-painted an old streak,
Each pen
Showed hungry and open beak
For pash-work in new grain
Now autumn-sweet time was come again.

Cyrus Sorgonyon was village-beau—
Little went
For feathers but he should show,
Little meant
Each look of him save to capture
A girl or two,
Bring them to peaks of rapture
The way he knew

As Cap-Handler, Sir Merry-Much,
Cardinal Sun-Smiler—
Not another such
Could you find for rare beguiler—
So sure he was he could have his way
For mastery, play fast and loose
With Beauty, there was vast excuse
For slipping into his lasso-noose.

So, when came his time to wed,
He had only to say
The word—a little pheasant-play,
A lift of the wing, duck of the head,
And what should a girl but take
Cyrus Sorgonyon, to see him jut
From church by his master magic-strut,
Foot forward for her sake?

Not for love—there was his law
Of marriage—yellow gold
Made an eyeful worth playing for,
The game was old,
While as for love,
He argued there would be enough
In her love of him—small need that he
Love too—'t were poor economy!

Dollar-Foot Farm, which was now
Farm-royal in the place about,
Knew one mistress who should bow
To none—past any doubt
She was bright and fair
As new dew dartles in maidenhair,
But what was more to the rounded pitch
She was rich, she was farm-royal rich!

Mistress of Dollar-Foot Farm—
There was her masterful charm
For Cyrus—he was clever, he knew
A breath to puff, a thing to do
Better than love and toiling
For love—good men were spoiling
For want of a farm
And prop and a little dollar-balm.

Gentle she was and shy
As a linnet in a bunch of quick,
So locked his image in each eye,
Would not look once to see him click
The plank walk, heel and toe,
Looked elseways as if she did not know
His step or shoulder-roll,
And his face there fast in her very soul.

'T was one sky-kingdom night—they stood
Face to face, one spar-ledge leaned
Against the moon through her cedar-wood
Where they stood,
So now his look was screened
As he would have it, her face put square
To the moon for twenty times as fair
As the round gold heaven which sported there.

So shadowed, he could tell her straight
His love-lie, so told her this:
He would, by Heaven, sooner miss
His chance of Heaven, take a beetle's fate
Than not have her for love, for mate,
Now she listened and loved and sighed
As he lied—her eyes burned open wide
As he lied—oh, how he lied!

Next came the pretty village-bells,
Rice-day, flower-shower of pimpernels
And quickset—all the people
Ducked under the church-steeple
To see her new tuck-back in yellow streak,
See heart come and go in her cheek,
And Cyrus for Prince of State
In sulphur waistcoat to mark him great!

Peace they lived in, till one day
Came a voice to tell
How he married her for pay
In land and citadel,
And no love for her, no care
For the curlew eye, willow hair,
Sweet soul, which was his too
For little he thought of it or knew.

Now she loved him in spite of this;
What wild waywardness love is!
Loved him for the poverty part
He so played in his game of heart,
Pity for him that he
Should small so as not to see
Her soulfulness closeted more charm
Than citadel could or any farm.

Since he married her for land,
Not for her heart and hand,
Plainly she spoke him this: Since he thought
More of onion and pumpkin-plot
Than love, her love and soul,
He should have it, have the whole
Farm-royal to make him glad,
Her birthright and all she had

Save herself, since her love
Was more for him now she knew
How he was weak, how the world was rough
And she strong, how she could do
Without gold, how he could not—
She sorrowed for his pauper-lot
That he must lose her—she saw
How small was his gain he lost her for,

Her Dollar-Foot Farm and gold,
Which she gave him to have and to hold
For sole master—all was done
In a day—then night
Came to put out the light
Her heart held and she was gone,
She with her whole woman-life
Meant to be mother and wondrous wife.

See now what little power
Man is when face to love:
Scarce was she gone an hour
When over and above
His whole possessions was her star
Clear to him now for cinnabar,
Olive, melon-marigold,
But high-fixed out of his hope or hold.

Field and meadow seemed now not much
More than bone-builders—thin prop,
Like a single naked crutch,
Each step of it a full stop
And she gone—now was his love
Roused in him to the hot puff
And no dodging—he could see his cross:
Soul afire, love at first loss.

Next then to capture her—
Each fibre in him took tug,
His whole soul began to stir
The very heart in him to hug
The blood up as if it knew
He was free, knew somewhat new
Peopled him, made him manful-true,
Unfoibled him, mastered him too.

Came a new night like the first,
By the same ledge they stood
At an angle of the wood,
Came the same concord-burst
Of moonlight—not now
Was any shadow at his brow,
Nor boot-and-button pride,
Nor lies, nor anything to hide,

But heart to show—not a word
Nor whisper of him could be heard,
Nor power was in him to speak—
Where the moon was playing, right there
His lips were tangled in her hair,
Knotted to each cheek,
While there her rich new whitèd arm
Coiled a whole heart 'round him, held each palm

Fast to his face, held him close
Where her deep dew-eyes flashed and played
Their fountains of soul, lips open laid
For him to pluck, his Sharon rose—
So he mellowed in her light,
Her mightiness of love and right
Which wins ever. So much for your gold
Men heap up to trip over—a tale twice told!

INCOGNITO

POOR fellow, I wonder how he died,
Or when or where;
I wonder, too, if any northwind sighed
To find him there;
Or leaped once to lend him of a breath
That he might try to plead an hour with death!

I saw him first in your crowded street,
Years long ago,
As I slipped to plunge beyond these feet
In silky snow
To land me straight in his open arms
Till I might reach to grope and hold his palms.

After days I chanced to meet him
Oft in a while
Where wheels put by—meet to greet him,
Catch his smile;
Some few thin thoughts, if an hour allowed,
As so, one day, I lost him in the crowd.

No part I knew of his either name,
Place or trend;
Always to me he was the same,
My unknown friend;
Stronger than lions, such gentle mind,
Who seemed to have left the world behind.

Said he once, "Such hours are long
 As tap for me;
I seem waiting in your throng
 To try to see
If they will need me in any near,
As, may be so, I 'm not wanted here.

"Other moods of other souls than mine
 May try the race;
Yet there be souls cast so true, so fine
 For not a trace
Of what has made them sweet or fair,
The flower and not the stalk is there.

"I was not to profit of this earth,
 To crush, to thrust;
I take your world for what it is worth
 Because I must,
As, too, I know beyond all this
Soul must come to count for what it is."

Sadness crowded into his face,
 Unprinted book
To write all thought out and not a trace!
 One vacant look
Put up to smother some written scroll
More times tells secrets of the soul.

So I lost him—he went his way,
 No great way off,
Where I must follow one short clear day,
 All soon enough;
But how I would have caught his knell
To put, in turn, these arms out where he fell!

Such soul was his as is no more seen
Where streets are dull,
Nor yet about your yellow ivy green
Whose throat is full;
Some superfineness left such trace
As touched to mark him higher than his race.

How I shall find him, or when or where,
I may not know;
Only his laurel whispers to the air
"It must be so";
Yet this I know, the south-wind sighed,
Then stooped to kiss his eyelids when he died.

CLAUDIA

OH, my brothers, Right is Power,
Power to take any flight,
Just as wings are part of an hour—
Dark has holes in which to cower,
All space is one throne of light.

I come or I go
By wall-moss, filigree-snow,
In among my meadows,
Out between my corn,
So I thumb the shadows
To see how they are born:
Shadows end where they begun,
Only little shapes of sun.

I have a way of knowing
What way I must go
If I would take to growing
More than thumb or toe,
If I would master music
As I master grass
So to get the true trick
Of pointing which it has,
If I would fling my thought
Into blazing skies,
Pluck at Melilot
For its yellow eyes,

Pluck the Bergamot
For his shape and dyes,
If I would see my gong-bird seize
At spaces to get more than these,
Hang his bells in the dancing breeze.

I do the right thing
Under trampling years
By persevering
Beyond kicks and tears,
Now to help my fellow,
Now to ruin wrong,
To turn the hard heart mellow
By a look or song—
Am I not more than once I was
By one lordly law of cause?

I make my way by might
Of what is true in me
As each star punctures his night
By sovereignty
Of straight going
And fine showing
To split eons through,
Table yellowness or blue;
I make my way by force
Of what is fine in me—
Shall fineness seek divorce
From divinity?

Do I not gather power
As I go rightly along,
All as this almond flower
To stand true and strong

Against striking shower,
 To fight my way
Into magic bower,
 Supernaculum day,
To steal the pink and cinnabar,
 Steal the split and wink
Of yonder star?

So by the Right I do,
 By the Good I am,
By the Truth I strew
 To unmaster sham,
By what kind fine heart
 I have in hand
To play my part,
 To take my stand
Against champion cheat
 Or what is small,
To grow what is sweet
 And true and tall,
I gather to me power
 Out of all space,
Soul out of each hour,
 Frame out of every place,
Just as this Tokay-flower
 Will mantle so high
To get the sea-green shower
 And poppy dye,
Capture sweet and fire and power
 Out of every sky?

"Ah," but I hear you say,
 Claudia has not come your way;
She for whom you wait
 Is a life-time late,

While you are passing on,
 Half your life is gone
 And Claudia may not be born!
 What of your boasted gift
 To gather Power by the way?
 What of your trick of thrift
 If you forfeit half your pay?
 What of the good in you
 For the good you do,
 Your life whittled true and through?—
 Claudia has not come your way!"

This in reply I hold:
 Man is not great
 By his pile of gold
 Which will compensate
 His labor and cold,
 Not great by what he counts
 For purposes of gain,
 But only by what he surmounts
 To let his soul-part reign
 For only love of Right
 Which is Beauty so far
 Beyond his plug of sight
 Or his lucky star
 As to poise uncomputed fair
 Beyond blue zenith or white air,
 Supra-solar heart in lieu
 Of French rose or upland dew,
 One pure nameless Beauty in view.

Now I know I shall see her;
 By such reason I know
 She is 'round me and near
 Any way I may go;

For out there is her form,
 In my heart she is kept,
 So what care I if storm
 Has threshed or slept,
 Or when I shall have her to hold—
 Comes endless time ever late,
 Grows the soul ever old,
 Am I to lose my mate
 While I gain ground and gold
 To sputter my puny breath,
 Live only to prepare for death
 And nothing?—Behold, what a look,
 Life one little laughing puke!

Just now as I was musing
 I looked out over my lawn
 Where the melon-fly is cruising
 Now his raisins are in pawn,
 While I watch him take his run
 Between leaves for a trick,
 Whip the dew up just to glisten,
 Draw his bow so I can listen,
 Fetch the Sharon rose a lick,
 Pick his mate there in the sun,
 All so sumptuously done.

Yet I am to peter out,
 Measure purpose with his snout,
 Lay me down where he lies,
 Copy him his way he dies,
 My soul meant to banquet flies!
 He had his day and plump;
 You saw him fan and pump,
 Take his folly-jolly jump,

Hang him to a Concord-leaf
To get the whisper of sweet relief,
Pack his keg in honey,
Climb his pole of agrimony
To fatten between the wings—
So he tickles and sings!

He has had his day,
All he could see to think;
He made his best display,
His ellipses of blossom-link,
Followed his pumping-bent,
Kept his swinish sentiment,
Galloped in moonlight haunts,
Took the orchid for his jaunts,
Saturated all his wants—
Just his wing of purple ink
Soared as high as he could think.

'T is otherways with me:
I have a thing to do
Not measured by your shoe;
I have a scope to see
And a vast to think
Not closeted by a wink—
I reckon with eternity!
He is satisfied with lips
The while I am not;
He likes to die where he dips
In his treacle-pot;
I am satisfied with nought
Of this life I see,
Save that soul is wrought
Of supremity

And I 'm to become supreme—
There 's my supra-solar dream!

My fly has had his day
 His pot-slop way;
He sang and feasted at play
 Among sun-ambulations,
Found his field of destinations
 Meant rich crops of limitations,
And he is happy to know
 Cunning nature made him so
He learns to tumble and swim,
 Learns the worth of wind and limb,
So now that his flight is eased,
 Each wild hunger is appeased,
He is overmosty pleased,
 Tickled if only he snuffed and sneezed.

But how runs life with me?
 I have such crop of want
As demands immensity,
 More than moonlight haunt,
More than eye shall see,
 More than fingers shall pick,
More than your philosophy,
 More than your molasses-lick.
Life has glutted his beak,
 My fly in his melon-house,
Petted each tiny freak,
 Furnished him palace and spouse;
Champak leaves he has for dippers,
 Little velvet flowers for slippers,
Puffs of aroma wind for breath
 To soothe him if he languisheth

In his lap of edelweiss,
Such kind sky to close his eyes
He never knows he dies.

What could he see of Right?
What should he learn of Wrong?
His was the pinky light,
Rubadub song,
Parabola flight
All the day long
In his forest of dock
With measured swing
And ting-a-ling
Like a drowsy clock.

Am I not more than he,
I with my wrong and right,
I that have more to be,
Have eternity in sight
To compass what there is
In store for me
Because I know there 's this
Much more of me
Than I may get out of drupe,
Out of moon or lake
Or cauliflower cake
Or spring with its music-troop?

Yet is he feasted full,
This my melon-fly,
Took his longest pull
In his waves of rye,
Made the most he could
Of all he had,

Just his pigging-mood
 To be full and glad
 Of a flower or breeze
 Just to take his ease
 According to his size,
 Scatter as the pollen flies—
 So he snuggles and dies.

Yet has he done his most
 Before he comes to die,
 Whether he be made of ghost
 Or only of paste and dye;
 He flew his highest,
 Reached his deepest,
 Drank his dryest,
 Clomb his steepest,
 Filled him bumper-full
 As his April pool,
 Fetched his wing a swish
 Above any damper,
 Never knew the wish
 He could not pamper;
 Died, and he never knew
 He was meant to die
 More than my bolbonacs do
 Where they parch and sigh.

Man is of other stuff—
 I know that I am I;
 Belly is never enough,
 Life will never satisfy;
 In spite of all I do
 Which is heartfelt-true,
 More there is of me to be
 Once to be the whole of me,

More there is that I shall do,
 More for me to widen to
To throw my keenest spark of blue
 Than this one life shall give,
All in spite of my most I live—
 So man souls and grows while he dies
And this life never satisfies.

If so I am to end
 When I am gone,
To part forever with my friend
 And my gonfalon;
Never my Claudia to find
 I so waited for;
This earth just the tiger's mind
 And his jouncing jaw;
If I 'm to leave behind
 What I hungered for
Which was so out of sight
 And out of touch
Because the Power was so bright
 And the Heaven so much;
If I am to mix my soul
 With all that is dust,
On a level with pewter bowl,
 Less than the grunting gust,
And I have wilted and died,
 My soul gone ungratified,
Then am I less than he
 That gluttoned his whole cupidity,
My small melon-sucking bee!

So I grow to look
 Beyond mountain-brook,

Beyond apricot-basket
Or closet-casket
To widen my sight to see
Farther than mere melon-bee,
To widen my heart to more
Than all which is gone before;
So I reach for spirit-might
By my practice of Right,
Power which is born subtle in me
As is divinity,
This Power which I increase in life
By uncompromising strife,
Just as I grow an arm
By dexterity of palm,
Power to outmaster masters,
Overtop a world's disasters,
Smash my way through by Right
Always to new greater height
To come to greatness beyond
Gadflies in their mullet-pond
To play my whole soul
In such noble sphere
As I find nor bole
Nor breath of here,
Power in me to rise
Loftier than yonder skies
So I reach to be
All there is of me,
So I compass my ends,
All ways, all thought,
New love, old friends,
All there is to be got,
More of me to be
Than all worlds I see,

And——

Claudia is part of all
Eternity that I claim,
'Though I never knew her call,
'Though I never heard her name!
I know I am passing on,
I know half my life is gone
And Claudia may not be born;
Yet is she sure for me
As is my eternity;
Yet shall she follow on
After I am gone!

Or yet may she be here
In my every day,
Near me as song is near
When my maples play
Their robins in the leaves,
And I shall have her one superb day—
So the heart of the world achieves!
Or yet shall she find
I am close behind
Where she is gone before,
Is beyond me and more
Than I may see with my bite
Of eyelash-light,
And I 'm to have her bye and bye
Just where you think you saw me die!

Be the time as it may,
I will hold to my confident way—
That Right is Power you shall see some day.

THE GENERAL

To the drums,
Rub-a-dub,
Here he comes,
King of cuts,
Blows and butts,
A heel and toe trip to his struts,
Rub-a-dub;
Beat the drums
As he comes;
'T is a way, so they said,
He buried his dead;
To the drums!

To your chimes,
Cling-a-ling,
Ringing rhymes!
Choke the gongs
Full of songs
Till they put a new ring to his wrongs,
Cling-a-ling!
Peal them out
To a shout;
Your great General is here
To build hope out of fear—
Ring them out!

The General

To the guns,
Rancour-boom,
Spitting suns!
Settle all
By a ball!
So short—no time lost thinking at all;
Belch your guns,
Swish the fire
High and higher;
'T was a way he had
To smelt good out of bad,
Gentle sire!

To the guns,
Boom them out,
Sires and sons!
What of fire,
Blood and mire?
Will they not serve to mount him yet higher?
To your guns,
Belch them loose
For God's use!
Blow the thunder apart
For a stroke of his art
To confuse.

Flap the flags,
White and red,
Shattered rags,
Bored and split
Bit by bit
Like his men with teeth sown in a pit;

Hoist the flags—
Red and white,
That is right:
Red for blood, white for death,
All is told by a breath
Of his blight.

To the feast,
Drain your cup
To its least,
'Though they sleep
In the keep
Of a ditch after all—'though they sleep;
Tipple wine
That is red
To the bled;
Will they listen to taste
From their doom-darkened waste
Of the dead?

Monk and priest,
Ring them in
To your feast;
To the cowl
And the bowl,
War is a parting of body and soul!
Drink for drink,
Human hate
Made him great!
What a greatness to kill
With his consummate skill
For the State!

The General

To the dance
Till his soul
Reel and prance!
Let him feel,
Head and heel,
How men are ranked by the cut of their steel!
Teach him that!
Teach him war
Is a door
And a way up to power
By the light of the hour
As before.

Are men great
Where they kill
And they hate?
Is it weak
To be meek?
Or must it be settled all in a week
On the spot
With men's blood
In the mud?
Was there no other way,
Not an hour for delay
To make good?

Drop your flag
To half mast,
Drop the brag!
Solemn slow
As you go;
Drop the strut of a proud heel and toe;

Death is death.
 What was war
 Fashioned for?
 Not for glory or power
 By your light of the hour
 As before.

Toll the chimes
 Deep to soft
 Without rhymes!
 Let a swell
 Of their bell
 Lift its wail to the pitch of death's knell!
 They are gone,
 All for war
 And what for
 But to settle disputes
 By the law of the brutes
 As before?

Muffled drums,
 Tap them light
 As he comes!
 Chain the sound
 Within bound
 At a thought of the souls underground;
 Softly low
 Now the heart
 Does its part!
 Did he kill?—lower the voice!
 Who would leap to rejoice
 At his art?

RAISON D'ÊTRE

ONCE was a man
Who took a mind in this world to do
What best he could, so laid him a plan
 To be brave and true
To himself just as his honest thought,
Nor knuckled to what the others taught—
See how they chopped his dream in two!

There was a church—
He must think their way to do their trick
Of “thumbs up,” à la candlestick,
 Play parrot on a perch
 To quobble and bob
 Like a nincom-nob
Lest they leap to put him in the lurch.

There was a law
Most men think worth pigging for:
He must part his hair to a certain crease
Which makes heads famous for their fleece,
 Put a bell-shape to his pants
Or keep single, lose his chance
At women and mighty circumstance.

There was a way
Men took to following what was good
A thousand years before the flood—

He must pickle, must skulk and pray,
Mind what others do and say,
Ask not the "why" of it nor "whether,"
Or get his flight clipped in the feather.

Once was a book—
He must take it to stuff his youth,
Never a wink at it once to look
To see if it spilled a slop of truth—
Let the bait be sorry pulp,
Sculpin-like he shall take the hook,
Measure soul by the swallow-gulp!

Now came the school—
My little man must bend his back
To the wink-wise master's thunder-quack—
Was he not ruler and rule
To model spirit keen and thin,
Give me the lordliness of shin
And hoodwink of a capuchin?

Next is the bell—
I am rung in and rung out,
Choked by precept, left in doubt,
In lust of Heaven, in fear of Hell—
And what now is to do,
Looking about in the morning blue,
To make me master through and through?

First is the man
To be free to be most he can,
Himself just and no aping;
Best is the shape which is self-shaping,
Power on the spirit-plan;
Whoso would only copy
Grows scarce a genius of the poppy.

Raison d'Être

Freedom for man!

The one thing first in the world to grip
For growth, for more place and span,
Nor a curl of your priest-dominion-lip—
Yet is Power put up to be put down,
As gold lips conquer the cloud of frown,
As only the storm wears a rainbow-crown.

See how the hours

Of life are full of opposing Powers,
Priest and Poverty and Death
Scarce willing you should draw a breath—
There 's the glory in it to see
If you can overcome the three
To rise to government mastery!

Man shall be free

As the lintie sings in his singing bough,
Careless of what the end may be
Or why he sings so now,
Only that he shall wake his tree
To rapture, that he may free
His heart of his wildest wizard-glee!

Is it not so

Ye cannot by any thinking know
More than that a man shall be
Most in him for loftiest best,
Which he may not, save that he be free
To make his whole soul manifest,
And devil take the rest

Of your Power or Law

You monk-men crush a brother for,
Just for your kingdom of Power and Law—

As if a man were not meant to be
His own high priest and majesty,
Nor a thought of you, nor a smutch
Of your toad-stool altar's venom-touch!

Think you of Power,
How the thing is meant to be overcome,
Not to put me to cower,
To pinch my lip up, to strike me dumb,
Nor yet to bring me to my knees
For worship or to appease,
Put me to beg and hum!

I 'm to be man
Not by your whimpering coward-plan
To duck under, cock up a lip
To whine lest I let my Heaven slip,
To thumb your pipe-organ praise,
Look the lap-dog look of amaze—
Love is the bent of these latter days.

To fight—to fight
For the man in you and Beautiful Right—
To seize life by the hour
To love and overcome and acquire Power—
You your own Majesty of Law
To wing-broaden and soul-soar—
There 's the thing in life worth being for!

A SONG IN A THISTLE

I

PRETTY bird,
What I heard
Was a whistle
From the blushes
Of a thistle
Where the thrush is;
What I saw
Was a quiver
Of a claw,
Was the gripple
Of a throat
For the ripple
Of a note
Through the hushes
Where the thrush is—
There was orange, melon, blue;
How the sky-stripes ribboned you!

II

Sky-blown bird,
First I heard
Just a flutter
In a nettle
And a mutter,
Saw you settle,

Now you came
Like the quiver
Of a flame
Where the needle
Pricked your foot,
Saw you tweedle
At the shoot,
Spread to settle
In the nettle—
Not a note of you was heard
And the sting there, pretty bird!

III

What a bird!
Once I heard
How you carol,
Trip to whistle
Light and feral
Above thistle,
Trap or tree;
Not a quiver
To your glee,
But such singing
Souling throat
For the ringing
Of a note
Through the iris
Where the fire is!—
All sky-blue took to singing
Now the heart in you was ringing.

IV

Plucky bird,
Spirit-spurred

A Song in a Thistle

To abandon
 Peace for foment,
 Put a hand on,
 For the moment,
 Handsome thorn,
 Try the sliver
 Of a scorn,
 Clap a nettle
 Under wing,
 Keep your settle,
 Hug the sting,
 Stop your singing
 For the stinging—
 But the bird of you was there,
 Passion-throated, fashion-fair.

v

Just a touch,
 Quite as much
 As was needed
 Of the luses
 To be heeded
 Where the thrush is,
 Plum and bell!
 There was apple
 In a dell,
 Amaryllis,
 Coriander
 Where my rill is
 And germander,
 Patrimony,
 Flower of honey—
 But you must face the picket!
 Put a foot there, flower will prick it!

VI

How could you,
Gold and blue,
Made for winging
Above weather,
Tuned to ringing,
Spirit feather
Fine and free,
Take to dropping
Down to me,
Take a yarrow
By the sting,
Clap an arrow
Under wing
For the skull dearth
Of this dull earth,
You who knew a sweeter thing
In your round clean robin ring?

VII

Meadow rang
Where you sang
Of your freedom
To be free
From this treedom
For a glee
And a sweep
To the deepening
Of the deep
Where your pillow
Dips and runs
On a billow-wash
Of suns,

A Song in a Thistle

Only winging
To be singing,
And the best of you is heard
Above meadows, pretty bird.

VIII

Next I heard
How you stirred
Through the thistle
For one piping
Of a whistle,
Saw you wiping
Half a wing,
Get to throbbing
Just to sing,
Cock a lip up
For a song,
Fetch a tip-up
Straight and strong
In the brushes
Where the thrush is—
You were singing once again
And the dagger-dab was vain

• IX

Since you knew
It was true
You could rise on
Wing and ether
And horizon
Like a breather
Of the stars,
Like a follower
Of Mars,

A Song in a Thistle

875

Drop the thistle,
Prick and thong,
For the whistle
Of a song
With Osiris
Where the fire is,
Pin your ribbons to a sky,
Pour a soul without a sigh!

THE HEEL OF THE HUNT

STEP to the stirrup,
Stick to the back,
Snap up the snaffle,
Tighten the slack,
Lash at the buttocks,
Club at the snout,
A jab at the spurs
Till blood spurt out;

"By Heaven I 'll teach him to dance in air
Now the pride of the hunt comes, my lady the fair."

Back to his haunches,
Paws in the wind
To spar at nothing,
He snorted, whined,
Foamed at two snipping
Chains in his teeth,
Nettled to plunging
Hell on the heath;

Stepped him a waltz to one end of the green
So churning of foam into blood should be seen.

Call to your partners,
Whip in the hounds,
Rattle your fox out
Over the bounds;

Grapple to horses,
 Spurs to their flanks,
 Let slip the bloodhounds,
 Wallop their shanks,
 Cut the hell loose over ditches and walls,
 And damned be the dog horse or rider that falls!

In over cross-roads,
 Log-hills, pits,
 Run down the red-skin,
 Kill him by bits
 Thumping his heart out
 Pleading to rocks;
 Seize on him, bloodies,
 Only a fox
 God made to be stripped of his small red heart—
 Break his back, snuff him out for triumph of art!

Yet our dogs veered off
 To left and right,
 Wandered away up
 Stream out of sight,
 Hating to spill him
 Fighting in flocks,
 Hating to kill him,
 One little fox
 Alone for his life, nor friend at his back,
 The ladies and lords of all hell on his track!

Drive in the sluggards,
 Leash them to trees,
 Teach them here is no
 "Go as you please";

Off with your jackets,
Out with the whips,
Thrash to slash their
Dull hides into strips;
Let them see stars till they see what to do,
And we 'll teach them, by Heaven, just a lesson or two!

Now for a hanging,
Gallows in sight!
Pick out the Leader,
Collar him tight,
String him there slowly,
High into air;—
See him, you flunkies,
Floundering there?
Get the point do you?—such lesson is old:
Better drum up your senses to go as you 're told!

Away once again,
The bold to the front,
Leaping to plunging,
Proud of the brunt,
Capturing chasms,
Thickets, swamps,
To kick a wide world into
Dust on their romps—
After him, sniff him out, hound him out, hounds;
Finest art for art's sake—what art has its bounds?

I loitered behind,
Watched for a chance,
Severed the hang-rope,
Looked for a glance,

Loosened the collar,
 Smoothed the head back,
 Balm at his nostrils
 Smothered the rack,
 Caught him up, poured him my flagon of wine
 As the eyes brought a message from his soul to mine.

Two brothers were by,
 Whipped nearly to death;
 I bathed them, swathed them,
 Helped them to breath;
 One under each arm,
 Brave Leader in front,
 We took to the saddle
 And heel of the hunt;
 All three now close to me, arm in arm,
 As we galloped by paddock and thicket and farm.

The sun was dipped down,
 Half smothered in red,
 Smeared to the rim
 Like a bucket of blood;
 Sudden a new heart
 Panted behind,
 Throbbled one low thin
 Gasp at the wind,
 Stopped as we stopped, as right there by near
 Young Rennard himself fetched up in the rear.

Such eyes strained through
 Such soul's fine rain
 Of tears swallowed down
 In the heart again

As he reeled to sink
In one low last lair
As if he knew well
How friends were there.
Nor would I barter his look to me then
For a wave of your rounded-up plaudits of men.

To horse once again,
Rennard and all,
As we answered a ring
Of the night-horn's call,
Galloping straight away
Back to the start;
And they may have it,
Sport without heart!
But give me, instead of a place at the front
On your playfield of slaughter, the heel of the hunt!

PRUNELLA'S PRIEST

One Supreme God is man
Of his own part, in his matchless circle,
He not a stitch of your marionette-plan
To bring him down to his jingling least
By an altar-trick or quirkle,
You gorming gulping priest,
So you may train him to follow,
To double under and wallow
In your anaconda-swallow!

I MEAN you, you lynx-eyed priest,
You soul and belly of a beast
To argue men shall be policed
By ignorance, by fear, to put
Each one his conscience under your foot,
His right to think his way
Under your dog-monster play,
To crowd out of him, next to nil,
His man-shape of magic will—
Slavery for man, duck-under-dom,
So your power and kingdom come!
Priest-Day and Priest-Craft Day,
Yet all in the world you could say
Is "Bow down to gape and wonder,
God is in the split of thunder,
Knuckle down and knock under,
No priest ever made a blunder!"

Prunella's Priest

Omnipotent man is the man I sing,
Goodliness all for love of the thing,
Never his nose to wear your ring!

What a pretty thing it is
Of a summer day
You to watch a maiden play
Where the honeysuckles hiss
In a west wind, she to have her way
To go and come and sing,
Light of heart as forests ring
Or any songster on the wing!

Never thought of wrong is hers
Nor whistling wind demurs
'Though she only sings herself,
What she is—the siren elf—
Such a little silver laugh
To put me longing,
Stops the chewink at his singing
That he may hark and quaff.

On such a summer day
See her pass
To watch the meadow-pipit play,
Fetch his tumble in the grass,
Dance like joy to look
To see her shadow in his brook,
As if the whole sky tried
To catch her picture before she died!

Who would mask her face
To swamp such life,
Hide her in his dungeon-place,
Mother never nor gentle wife,

White petals in place of lips
 And Death there perches and sips,
 Save you, you lynx-eyed priest,
 You soul and belly of a beast?

Prunella was such a girl
 To amble like a wren in a cloud,
 Notes of song which could thirl
 To the echo, as all sky was loud
 Of the unmolested spirit of her—
 All the world would love to love her.

Soon as her day came to love
 She must stoop to confess!
 Goodness is not enough,
 She must be something less,
 Since never she could be more
 Than perfect heart to the spirit-core!
 There were you in your spider-coop,
 There was she too to stoop,
 And all to confess to you
 She was gentle and true
 As love is, and she loved too,
 Her prime patronymic sin,
 So now her troubles begin:
 How like a demon you scored her,
 How like a God you adored her!
 How you tried to force his name,
 Her man she loved her girlful way,
 Yet not a syllable came,
 Nothing of him she had to say,
 And so you made your judgment,
 This piece of weak begrudgment:

Prunella's Priest

PRIEST

I know this man you mean to wed,
So this much I say to you:
As well might you be dead,
Put in purgatory too,
For he makes bold to strike the Church,
To put us in the lurch,
Is wrong to the rib-end too,
No companion fit for you.
Wed him, and you have your deserts,
You drop your Hope-of-Heaven thought
For one consummate sorrow lot,
Your place outside our church!

PRUNELLA

How willingly now I leave
Your church, I who believe
In love, while here is every art
Put in practice, and not a heart!
I hark to the highest voice,
There's my choice;
I lean to the sweetest word
Ear ever heard;
I look to the finest thought
Spirit has wrought:
Love, which is lord of all,
Great or small;
Love, which has mastered kings
At the throne of things;
Love, and I tell you what,
You know it not,
You who double to your knees
Your God to please,

You who snivel to whine
 For your soul and mine,
Beg like a pauper for what
 Is denied you not,
Power to grow great as a man
 Would be or can,
Power to strike straightly for free
 As a kite in his tree,
High above heatherbell sod,
 High true as a God.

Haphazard Day,
Over and away,
I fly forth
Into east or north,
I dart high
Into pointed sky,
Or down I look
In my chromo-brook,
In whitèd air
For the rudeness
Or the goodness
Which is there—
Haphazard Day
And I away
To be free
To cut my path
Into aftermath—
I look to see,
I look for thee
Where song is flung
Above lip or tongue,
Where thought is tied
To the other side

Of worlds I see
In immensity—
On yonder stair
Of the freehold air
Blown everywhere
You are not there—
Where Leo runs
His wheel of suns
Against time
I see him climb—
Where Propus props
The sky nor stops
At crumbling tops,
Round is the air
As heaven is fair,
Yet you are not there!

PRIEST

But here, and God to be glorified!
For that has man lived and died,
I to bow down in the sod,
Smallen me to greaten God,
God to be worshipped, while so
I make humble in brow and toe
For God's sake, as who does not know
God has made and would have it so?
What shall be greater than I
Bow me down in shank and eye
To glorify God in his sky?
What shall be greater than I
Come to my whimper and sigh
To beg a lift of divinity?
Or what shall be greater than this,

Heaven for me, one spanking bliss,
I not a snuff of it to miss?

PRUNELLA

'T is greater to be great,
To be master of any fate,
Master and master at any rate!
What goes there great that you,
Your nose buckled to your shoe,
Duck the duck of a cockatoo?
What God is there shall be pleased
That you have wheezed and sneezed
Humility that he may be pleased?
What God is there would shackle
Head and beak so you only cackle?
What God is there to fatten
If he see you crawl and flatten?
What God is there would not, too,
Make another God of you?
But how to be God and be pauper too
In the soul of you?
How to see Truth like an eye-ball clear
And you quobble for fear?
How to stand straight and bow over,
Put soul under cover?
There 's the God of you to be
Much as any soul may see,
High undominated free!
There 's the God of you to know
All there is above, below,
More to come to, more to grow!
There 's the God of you to soar
High above what went before,
More to compass, more and more!

There 's the God of you to fasten
 Fingers where starfields vasten,
 Moonways glassen!
 What is there that you shall do
 Just to prove the God in you
 Like noble being, mastiff-true?
 What Heaven is for you you shall gain
 Like the soul of you put plain
 For perfect man and not a stain?
 What is there in worlds above
 Fills this endless soul enough
 Like human greatness, human love?

PRIEST

God is great, I am small,
 I am nothing, He is all,
 So what were greater, when all is said,
 Than I humble me instead,
 Than I beg my daily bread?

PRUNELLA

Greater much that you earn it!
 Here 's one truth, you to learn it:
 Never 's a God in all the all
 Loves that you be humbled, small,
 To know you wince to blubber,
 Double like a thumb of rubber,
 To put you leaning on Power—
 There 's the violetted flower,
 Head against giant storm,
 Mouth up to the shower,
 Holds its own way and form;

Straight as truth it will stand,
Climbs always to leave the land
So the sweetest purple-worth
And best of it shall have birth
Safe above all grasping earth,
And not a God's hand to drown
Or hold the splendor of it down.

PRIEST

Yet is God mighty and mightiest
By all wisdom and all best.

PRUNELLA

Not that, oh vanity-brother,
But wholly surely something other
Than man is or may think
To think of by his cat-wise wink,
Other than good or better or best,
Other than any mightiest
You know of or may think of
To get your little lousy wink of.
Great is God as His endless sphere,
Great be you in your hemisphere,
God too, not a nerve to cower,
Conqueror of each militant hour
To love, outmaster, acquire Power.
Comes the whole mankind of weaning,
Only weakness comes of leaning,
So why this maudlin chapel-yelp,
This under-dog whining of a whelp
Always and always for heaven and help?

PRIEST

Nor worship of God, would you say?

Prunella's Priest

PRUNELLA

Worship is love by any way
 You shall grow greatness in you,
Noblest greatness to be or do
 Your best life uttermost and you man
For all loftiness all you can,
 All straightening and no crawling,
All greatening and no smalling,
 Supreme boldness of fine feeling,
All heightening and no kneeling,
 Not the one hairful of fear,
Not the one cock of an ear
 To that Bishop who fastens you down,
Finds God governs by His frown,
 You above priestliness to know
The God in you will have it so
 You shall be master all your way
Of Beauty as the ewe-gowans play
 Or puffins in a yellow day,
Nor a fillip for what those Bishops say!
 Is not your true life of love
Of man and God true worship enough?

PRIEST

Ah, but all men were meant to die
 Out of this every-day sky!

PRUNELLA

So are men meant to live,
 Meant to take and give,
To joy or suffer for strength
 Anyhow, any length,

So what you think hard or wrong
 Puts you each day each way strong
For manliness, which is godliness,
 While never the thumb-tap less
Would bring you to it to do
 Your royallest, wrought of you,
Would bring you to it to be
 More than men may look to to see.
Not for God, but for man is this earth;
 Not for God, but for man is this birth
Of Beauty I see around
 In every sky, in every ground
To grow to, become part of
 Other being beyond it,
You unmanacled, unbonded
 By power to throw off chains
Of monarchy by man or God
 To get above pains or gains,
To circle above this sod
 Of your poltroonish fears,
Above lickspittle tricks of whining tears
 To invite Power to come your way—
Is spirit meant to creep and pray?

PRIEST

Is not God in His sky
 As infinity is high?

PRUNELLA

Love God I may, bow down to Him I will not!
 Put that fire in your gabata-pot
To see if you get a new light,
 See man put under no heel of might

By authority to shape him this way, that way—
 As if I 'm to follow your clumsy cat-say!
 God in His heaven, I in mine,
 I to let my star-night shine
 Undominioned, co-divine!
 God to His infinity,
 I my blessed sight to see
 He would make no slave of me!
 God to His power, I to mine
 My way I was meant to incline,
 And no twig in your columbine,
 No part of your lily-pad pluck
 Which lies flat, face up-stuck
 As if afraid of sun-shine luck,
 I of myself to strike
 With the light wing of a shriek
 For loftiness God-fashion-like!
 God would greaten me to my greatest,
 Therefore do I stand my straightest,
 Never the pebbleful of fear
 But in my human hemisphere
 I shall master my righteous all,
 Be it large as you or small,
 Come to my crown-royal core
 Of king aye kinglier than before,
 And what God governs to accomplish more?

PRIEST

Reigns there no government of God
 In this ball of sod?

PRUNELLA

Power unto power,
 I unto me

By each bulbous hour
For mastery
To ply my art
Of soul and heart,
To play my part
Beyond the nod
Of fearful fool,
Beyond the rule
Of any God
And I strike high
Against his sky,
Beyond the rod
Of any God
To trick my knack,
Break my back,
And I my breath
To laugh at death,
I my power
To make for Might
Each laurel hour
By way of Right,
I my glove
And arm enough
To strike for love,
I my soul,
The elf of me,
Unkingdomed whole
High self of me
To gain my goal
Of mastery,
Nor ever look
In your blindfold book
You clap on me
That I may not see,

Nor one small fear
To make my way
By conscience clear
Beyond your clay
Of vulgar dreams,
Your Heaven to pay
As merit seems,
Your Glory-Day,
Your piggish schemes
To grow men great
By bribe or threat,
Your Hell to hate,
Your Heaven to get,
As if this soul were cold,
Hungered for the wipe of gold,
Hungered to be bought and sold
And not to love,
Which is gain enough,
Not to grow,
Which is all I know,
Not to be free,
Which is royalty,
While so you plod,
Whimper to God,
Fashion you see
Divinity
In bended knee,
Fashion you tower
To spirit-power
By what you cower,
By lifted palm,
Psalming qualm,
Shackled arm,
While I shall rise

Against my skies
Gyr Falcon-wise,
Nor a God to put
Me under foot
While I climb to shove
My flight above
Your trembling perch,
Your fawning church.

PRIEST

Grow not all things for God,
Circles of worlds, Dorado's nod,
Dew-fall in the primping sod?

PRUNELLA

Grow all things their best to be,
There 's your best divinity,
God in you, God in me!
Look the universes through,
What goes there to get or do
Better than the best of you?
Looks God once for fawnery
Of limp-hump or prayer or sigh,
Not for my foremost I shall do
For what is masterfullest true
Of me by my own trick and cue?
Where for you is your nobler plan
In any God's meridian
Than mastering and unmastered man?
Not for God is this life,
But all-forcefully for man,
He by loftiness of strife

Prunella's Priest

To make of him his most,
 To circum-widen his span
 To yonder unending coast
 Of vast creations, only to see
 More of him to grow to to be
 By one wide scheme of mastery,
 Integrity of soul his crown,
 Not a God to hold him down,
 Not a God to order so
 Soul should ever cease to grow,
 Not a God to govern me,
 Take my bow, my crookèd knee,
 I the God of me to be,
 I my own divinity!

PRIEST

Is there, then, no government
 Of the world?

PRUNELLA

Such government of Beautiful Laws,
 By effect and cause,
 As never a God shall stem
 The monarchy of them,
 As never a God shall clew
 His hand against you,
 God in his kingdom, I in mine
 For such power
 As hangs my Santenay vine
 In mountain flower,
 For such power as I shall swing
 By my blossoming
 My cheek red, my heart high

As the heliotrope sky
To run above earth, to make free
With sublimity,
To make vast with my soul
As the endless whole,
Nor a God to put me here or there
By his cunning care,
Nor a God to make of me dupe,
To give me my stoop,
Nor a God to have me to know
Your one way to go,
Nor a God to put me shrinking
For fear of his blinking,
Nor a God to govern my ways,
Shorten my days,
Nor a God to list for my whining,
For my chining,
Nor a God to meddle with me
In my egotry
To go my way my royallest,
Never your way nor loyallest,
Nor a God I shall bend my knuckles to
To pleasen his view,
Satisfy you,
Nor a God in anywhere to decree
Subserviency of me,
But God out of all time and space
And beautiful place,
Never his hand at a cause
But by Beautiful Laws,
Never his voice to be heard
Save in tree-beam or bird,
Or where the west wind ties a whistle
In ground-pine or thistle,

Never his hand in time to be seen
Save where the suns are sheen,
Planets green,
Beauty endless king and queen—
God for me I may conquer, acquire,
God higher ever and ever higher
Than where the suns are fire,
Constellations spire—
But not God ever to trick with me
In my divinity,
Not God ever to fumble with you
In the thing you do,
In your high masterful compound place
Where you run your regent-race,
Where you make surmounting cause
To mount to power, laugh at loss,
By homage to Beautiful Laws,
You omnipotent in your sphere
By virtue of virtue
To dominate this now and here,
Never God to help or hurt you—
There is your garden of power, oh my brother,
No other, as God lives, there is no other
Than homage to such Beautiful Laws,
Effect and cause,
As you may not put aside
In the soul inside,
More than in yonder spaces
Where worlds are wheels to know their places
To spin, to glisten and burn
Endless climbing fire supern
For always creations wider, higher,
New worlds breathing out of fire—
What universe holds an urn?

PRIEST

Is man, then, in his hourful
Of life all powerful?

PRUNELLA

"Be ye therefore perfect" in your sphere
(Perfect is he who does his best)
And this one thing of you is clear:
You have been put to such a test
As ranks you most and mightiest:

Perfect man,
Perfect power!
There 's the plan,
Here 's the hour!
Circumstance
Gives you chance,
You to choose
The first of you,
You to lose
The worst of you
As life goes on,
Night and dawn,
Ditch and lawn
To put the test,
Bare your breast,
Strike you down,
Stand you straight,
Snatch your crown,
Smash your fate,
Come by stealth,
Sap your wealth,

Prunella's Priest

Pick your eyes out,
Put your size out
In the world
Where you fashioned
And were passioned,
Proud and pearled,
Let the sliver
Spit you through,
Let the quiver
Turn you blue,
Learn the terror
Of an error,
Learn the power
Of a flower
Now it freckles
Fire-new,
Now it speckles
Water-blue
To play its part,
Capture heart,
Capture the eyes
And size
Of you—
Man for master,
Man for king,
Always vaster
Reckoning,
Always Beauty
Beckoning
Power to you,
Power to grow,
Power to do,
Power to know,
Never leaning

On a God,
 Ever weaning
 From this sod,
 Man for master,
 For forecaster,
 Man the God!

PRIEST

Omnipotent, then, would you say,
 Man is in his thicket-day?

PRUNELLA

Man omnipotent in his paddock—
 So a tortoise is or haddock,
 Is his highest, makes his most,
 Which is more than you could boast!
 In such universe without limit
 What omnipotence, will you say,
 Rises ever once to brim it,
 Once I stop to think one way:
 All Power—and there is no "all,"
 Only ever great and small,
 As ever smaller and greater
 Time ripens new mooning places,
 More worlds to no end of spaces,
 And so more Power, you to find
 Not omnipotence of any kind,
 But God all other than you divined.
 Then is omnipotence for me,
 I in my divinity,
 Far as I may reach to see:
 There 's the spider in his wall,
 There he thinks he has it all,
 Bandboxed in his silver stall,

Prunella's Priest

His net of high titled green,
 Just a dash of wine between,
 So, just as far as he may see,
 Is monarch in his poverty.
 Likewise so I stand to be
 Monarch far as I may see,
 Monarch of this soul in me,
 Monarch by divinity,
 One hand on eternity,
 I myself to compass good
 My way, not your way you would
 Nail me to your tune and mood.
 Mark your spider how he cingles
 His trap-house to see to root
 The soul out of a mooning newt,
 Sees not beyond, nor mingles
 Where the orange lily tingles
 In a bath of wind—looks not where
 The hawk lies on his pillow of air,
 Yet, far as he may see to see,
 He kingdoms in his royalty,
 Far as he shall have intent
 Lords he lord omnipotent.
 Have I the less power to be
 Master by autonomy
 Far as I may look to see,
 And I look so far beyond
 Life and my world around
 I chafe under each new bond,
 Hope unties me from this ground
 Once I see my falcon leap
 Into his shining deep,
 And I have eyes to see
 Far forever more than he,

Other soul-sublimity

I reach to because I see it,
 Bounden to embrace and be it—
 Why shall I not have the whole
 Of what I see in my seeing soul?—
 That your spider does in his hole!

Oh, to be free as the lark

In his pile of dark!
 Oh, to be free as a kite
 At his noon of height,
 Over black clouds to be ringing,
 Between the suns to be swinging,
 Cast my lot in the wild-flower tree,
 Let the sweet wind hark for me—
 Oh, to be free!

Oh, to be new as a day

At my song I play!
 Just to be new for an hour
 As the hyacinth shower
 To fall where vines are sighing, `
 To kiss where leaves are dying,
 To coat the croton another blue,
 Hang it in a chain of dew—
 Oh, to be new!

Oh, to be true as a shot

To the target spot,
 True as the splinters of light
 Flash eyes above night
 That I may see to be truing,
 That I look up to be doing
 Other than others may fly to do,

Prunella's Priest

Strike my emerald light or blue—
Oh, to be true!

Oh, to be free to be new,
Free to be true!
Not as my wild honey tree
Flutters to be free,
Singing never, ever sighing,
Flapping wings, yet never flying,
But free as a morning wind to flee
Full of dawn and melody—
Oh, to be free!

PRIEST

So you will leave us,
Nor yet believe us
Our convent-sisterhood
Makes part of all good,
Refuge for you
From your world of sin,
Penance to do,
New life to begin,
Your one way to see
Divinity
Is not of this life
Of lowermost,
Of mother and wife,
Of pleasing host,
Yet you see how true
This passing ghost
Is all of you,
How the world is small
'Though you have it all,

How a life is short
As a bubble's sport,
While the soul of you
Craves a way to hide
From the world outside,
While the whole of you
Points to brighter day,
Claims a larger pay
If you hold to right,
Put the world to slight,
Keep Heaven in sight.

PRUNELLA

Not I to keep your Heaven in sight,
Not I by kingdoms to be bought;
I for only love of Right,
For never hope nor thought
Of more than all my soul to be
Mistress of what is most in me,
More than you shall name or see,
Soul to come to, soul to be!

Not I to dodge aside,
Not I for you to hide
In cloisters—I was made to fight,
There 's my first right royal right,
All a world for me in sight
To clinch with and unmaster,
Never to escape the blow
I must give and take, and so
I am more than your saint in plaster.

Not I to creep away
Out of the storm of day,

Coward to snuggle me about
 By bars to shut the struggle out,
Coward to snivel to do
 The will of you,
And not a chance to be true
 Since not a chance to be false,
Nor yet a way to be new
 In your temple of halts.

Never is higher way for me
 Than the world I see,
Once I strike for power,
 Face the ugly hour,
Tempter and tempted, and so
 I will come, I will go,
Free as honeysuckles blow,
 Mightier than you trick or know.

Not I to slink away
 From my race and day,
Not I to dodge the blows
 Of a world that grows
The woman in me by what I face
 Of counter-force, hold to my fighting-place,
Hold to fighting for my race,
 Nor homage to your throne of grace!

Not I to crawl aside
 From the sun above wide,
Nor miss one violet day
 Where my cedar birds play
And I to hold one truth—this:
 Head up to storm or moon-beam bliss,
Foot against any precipice

If I would wear the briolette,
Match the violet.

PRIEST

Comes there no reward
At the hand of God?

PRUNELLA

Reward of soul which I grow
By the way I go;
Reward of power I achieve
By the light I give,
By my love of Right,
My love of light,
Nor Heaven in sight,
Only my reward of Might,
As the field flower blues its wings,
Wears the beryl dew in strings
Face up to the force of things.
Reward, and I care not what,
So I come to know
I am more than gain to be got
Beyond, below,
More than spoon-handled to dip,
All hand and lip
To take, if once I have paid
Your price, get my Heaven instead
Of myself which is more
Than your market-store,
Of my soul which is vaster
Than any master,
Soul in me to outwisdom you
By what I am,

More of me than what I may do
 Or diagram,
 More of me than what you may span
 By your hand of man,
 Than what you may cage for keep
 To hark to your peep,
 More of me than what you may score
 Forevermore
 By thought, your thought which is plastered,
 Heart alabastered,
 More and more of soul in me,
 One part of eternity
 Will not be mastered.

A CONFSSIONAL

Once was one summer morning
 Of an olive awning
 Under which they stood,
 Girl and priest in their broods of trees
 Against their sun-pond—there they could
 Try titles with birds and bees
 To get what moon-flowers have to drop
 Of white light or early crop
 Of sweet—how mellow
 The heart is when a day is yellow!

Soon he was at it to pick
 Phoenix, sandalwood stick,
 Flowers of the swan wing, leaves
 Of teaberry or cotton cheek,
 Boughs of fingers in copper greaves,
 Anything to help him speak
 To say—what should he say
 And his whole heart there gone that day

As fire flies out of a sun
 To draw you to it—you both are one?

By an edge of the wood
 To build her a bower
Of the pied-eyed flower
 In willow-snood
At the lake's front foot
 Where the sun was glued,
His heart now he put
 To the task, while there
His new confession-booth was fair
 As her look to him in the melted air.

She should be priest
 In his place that day,
Hear his heart at least,
 All he had to say
Of how his priestliness was vain
 When soul was king, truth was plain
And love was come in the world again,
 As there she sat in her house of flowers,
Princess now on gilded hours,
 Power of love above the Powers,

He to confess—that he did—
 Nothing now of conscience slept,
Nothing of his heart he hid,
 Nothing of his love he kept
But she should have it, she to take
 Heart and soul of him to keep
High above prizable stake
 Of Heaven at his altar-heap—
Love unbosomed and ungloved
 There as he told her how he loved,

Prunella's Priest

How above earth she was great
Of heart and spirit-state,
Above altars or what he knew
Church held to be true,
How greater than hope or faith
In worlds beyond death
Is the brave man true
To his heart to do
His soulfullest here
For not a fear,

For not a bribe
Of a Heaven to get,
For not a gibe
Of your parson tribe
At their petty let,
But yonder coast
A man to boast,
For soul is most!
Now fetched an eagle in trim
At the voice of him

As if he would give him fight,
Put him to the touch
To try his flight
If his pluck was much,
If his heart was right,
As on he went breast-first to tell
His love of her, nor knew his words
More than the galaxy of birds
Just overhead striking their bell
To ring and sing him all is well.

And she—well, nothing less
Than she too must confess:

"Once you said you knew the man
 I loved and meant to take,
 Knew, too, he had a plan
 To strike the church for sake
 Of truth and freedom and love,
 Which was cause enough
 That I should put him aside,
 Take your church for guide.

"Never you knew my man,
 Never you thought to guess
 Who he might be, what was his span,
 What his heart for mightiness
 Once he were roused to do,
 Roused to be bold and true
 To strike for power, make men kings,
 Not your pimple underlings,
 Mole-eyed, their house in the sod,
 All fours down to you and your God.

"Never you thought my man might be
 Bottled in your hierarchy,
 Himself bound hand and foot,
 Silent as a conquered coot,
 Nor breath of him left to speak out
 The princeliness of doubt,
 Nor man of him left to make
 One fight for love and freedom's sake—
 Never you dreamed to see
 Who my man might be—

"He that is true as Light,
 Kingly as Right,

Prunella's Priest

He that shall follow me
As I follow too
Where his soul is free
For a will to do,
For the man to be,
He that shall climb for love
To all heights above,
Never enough

"Of new worlds to be kinging,
New truth to be singing,
As he shall follow and I know
Love is why he follows so,
Love of mighty love and truth,
Love which hangs about his youth
And I follow—there am I,
One moon in his galaxy—
Evermore beyond and above,
Yet all for love, all for love!

"Was he not for me
Before eternity?
Was I not for him too
Before the heavens were blue?
Shall I lose him now, and he
Forever meant for me,
Lose him by a church between
For an evil screen
To put us forever apart,
Snap this bondage of the heart?

"Is he not a priest
In love, at least,
With me, I too with him,
Heart and soul and limb?

May we not go together,
 Suck the sun-pond weather,
 Our two lives evergreen free
 As yonder dickcissel in his tree
 Flings his breath of melody
 For you and me?

"Is there no way to go
 Higher than the way you know,
 Nothing nobler to see
 Out in immensity,
 Nor sky of a cleaner blue,
 Of wider view
 Than narrows in your church for you,
 Your Pontiff might,
 Your altar rite,
 Your Heaven in sight?

"Together, I and you,
 For what is high and true,
 Always beyond us too—
 Man to stand straight and free
 As stands divinity,
 God in you, God in me,
 Never God to crawl to,
 Kneel great or small to,
 Man his own God to grow vaster,
 Always man for master and master."

What a pretty thing it is
 Of a summer day
 You to watch a maiden play
 At woodnotes, her meaning this,
 That love in the world is come to stay

As hearts are meant to swing
Free as bottle-flowers in spring
Or any songster on the wing!

Now she fingers troops of moss,
Club-moss at her feet,
Handfuls of sun-boon sweet,
And what of night, what of loss?
Is life not meant to be incomplete,
The best of it I find,
My pot of joy, juggling mind,
Meant to be dropped and left behind?

There she argued to her priest
Her April way:
"Soul is more than Heaven may pay,
More than your eternal feast
Of joy is this power to make your way
By force of soul to be
More than life may touch or see,
One self-divined divinity."

They together—the birds above
Like souls in air
Pointed to sing another where
Of freedom and power and love
Beyond us, as always upward there
The kildee climbs and sings
As if he saw what new life springs
Beyond this heavy world of things.

They together, maid and priest,
That great summer day
Meant for love to have its way,
Love of man and truth and beast,

Unkingdomed as the pinon-jay
 To shout from tree to tree
 More than he may think or see,
 All of his soul-sublimity.

They together—priest no more
 To snivel and bend,
 But man straight on to the end,
 Heart straight in to the core,
 And she for lover and perfect friend—
 Oh what a world is here
 For man, for higher and freer,
 Never a God to interfere!

Pond-lush of lilies in store
 And he gathered them,
 Knotted her his diadem;
 Love was master, soul was more
 Than galaxies to no end of them
 Now he could see in her eyes
 More than what is merely wise,
 The light which climbs beyond the skies.

Lilies made fast to her brow
 As his lips there too,
 Love was more than all he knew
 Of canon or altar-bow,
 Love was a way to be free and true,
 Was light and power and ruth—
 Oh the monarchy of youth,
 Love of man and moon and truth!

They loved, and they were one together
 As the sun and his pretty weather,

That Oxford flower and its eye of dew
Looking the one pink look to you
That they are one soul through and through—
Is there question of "why" or "whether"?
Has snow-bird or yaffler protested aught?
Have the loud mountains made a sign
But human love, if little or not,
Is more than all thinking is, divine?
But love shall be largest to be best,
Will grow to more, never an end
And a universe for a friend,
Every atom born to be blest.
Higher to evermore higher,
Always one uncollected desire
Soul has, like constellations spire
Never to reach their outward fire.

Now are our lovers under their tree,
Under their silver-leaf tree,
One ivy 'round it, vine and tree
To climb to rich sublimity—
Soul is meant to do and to be,
Nought for fear, nothing for small,
Love of man and God and all.

ONE NOBLEMAN

HE was a nobleman—so your world goes—
Nodded his plumes to her wayward hair;
What could it matter, so they were there
To smother her blushes and no one knows?

He was a nobleman—so your world said—
Which meant he knew how to plunge his sword,
Which meant he knew how to dodge his word,
Play false to women, take long to wed.

Think of his palace-place, park on park,
Kestrels to swallow the plum-sweet air,
Freshets of silver lakes dimpled there
To laugh at each sky, wring song from the lark!

Half a moon-mottled-night dance on his green
And he could be found at a fountain's edge
To talk of love while he schemed to hedge,
And the sweet girl shrinking lest she should be seen.

Had he aught to fear?—such men are brave,
Take to a sword like bees to a sting,
Rap to slap back till mountains ring,
And men would forget how he was a knave!

Take him for what he is, is he, then, brave
For this, that he holds no feeling left;
He who could cut the child-heart bereft
To tumble her lover into his grave?

His was one terror-reign through the land;
Lived never man who could break his sword,
Where notch by notch his murders were scored
Till thought turned white at his red right hand.

Your youngest and bravest, he spitted them through,
Decked his blade with the flower of the land,
Till at last one leaped to take a hand
With the unmatched monarch, show what he could do,

One so over-young, soulful, small;
A white right cast of the black left eye,
One withered patch in the cheek close by,
And the cut of the father was over him all.

They knew not each other, boy and man,
Now they crossed swords at his fountain edge;
No chance this night to play false or hedge—
Red lips spit truth where the steel tongue ran.

Till sun's good-night look over his hills
They fought like demons across the green
Where the white-eyed moon could now be seen
Just as their blades lapped blood to the gills.

His lordship found, for once in his life,
His match—yea, more than a match that day;
Dropped to his knees, so the people say,
To beg for breath at the edge of a knife.

Spare me this life this once, only this,
All you name shall be done by me;
My whole possession shall rest with thee,
While yours be laurels other men miss!

They glared at each other, boy and man—
The left-eyed cast and the withered patch
Were there on each and a perfect match
As the moon held a light where the wrinkles ran.

Then spake the boy to him words of a man,
Yet would have clung to him for his child,
Shouted he knew him—his cry was wild
As heart could shout since the world began.

“Your word to my mother! take her for wife,
Take her for better or worse this night,
Or close those eyes to morning light
To grope through dark to death’s other life.”

Pale night is most gone, day-light is red,
Dew-gems stand tied in maiden-hair;
A nobleman sees how love is fair:
“The mother of such a son who would not wed?”

And then, swords aside, father and son
Are locked to each other’s stout embrace,
Heart leaps to heart, face on face,
For the will of the Kingdom of love is done.

RUN-AMUCK MACK

PITCH-BOOT boy, while what a kick

He could land

Like a pounder at a pick,

Or turn a hand

Into fist,

His neighbor's nozzle into grist,

As if pounding made the gist

Of what a man shall do

To prop him higher than his shoe!

Solid McRough, not to speak

Of his power

Of necromantic beak,

Of his tower

Of bruit

To name him most magnificent brute

In triumph of lofty foot

To the point immense

Which marks the genius of events.

"Hold," he will say to his man,

Face to face,

"I hold you because I can,

I short your pace

To an inch

That you may feel my kick and pinch,

Learn to obsequy and flinch

To find out who I am

That play at loo and loot—I 'm Pam!"

To another he cries "Hold,
 You are small,
While I have need of your gold,
 For I am all,
 I am you,
My thought makes your thought through and through,
You play pretty cockatoo
 To prattle and make your bow
Knee-shape as I show you how.

"I whistle and you dance,
 You shall see,
You the slave of circumstance,
 As, too, of me,
 You to do
What dumb-head thing I point you to
If or no it pleaseth you
 Because I have said the word,
And you will wince like a prison-bird.

"So mount you yonder flat rock
 In the sand,
Dance there like a weathercock
 The saraband
 To a point,
While I whistle and you unjoint!
Man is grafted to be prained!
 Give me but half a hold
On his conscience, I 'll have his gold."

There he dances, top and keel,
 Mack whistles,
Dances like a moth will reel
 Round a thistle,

Run-Amuck Mack

Forward quick,
Then back as if he knew the prick,
Felt reverence for a thistle's kick,
While Mack puts tooth and grin
Hilarious to see him spin.

Shall there not come an end
To such power
As maketh a whole world bend
And cower
Unto God,
I scarce more than potato-pod
Meant to bow me in the sod?
Else why this will in man
To break bondage, soar great as he can?

What is there more I shall do
Than my truth,
Stand uncompromising true
Fist and tooth
Beyond fear,
All of me, so I domineer
Power which is against me here,
To put me too in power
For climbing till I grow my flower?

So there he dances, poor man,
Mack whistles,
Fattens like an ortolan,
Shines and bristles,
Claps his side
To see his puppet slip and stride
Now he has his conscience tied,
So little left of him
Outside his hop and swap of limb.

Now comes my man into place,
His place of power,
For Fate will right about face
Quick as an hour
Just to prove
Nothing runs in one endless groove,
Soul is meant to spread and move,
And so my truth is this:
Men are Gods of their destinies,

For now comes one strange thing to tell,
Strange as fact:
My man points his petronel
And Mack is Macked
In return
With "Now my chance, now my turn,
Let me see *your* shin-bones churn,
Make you your bow in grace
To dance the whirlwind out of place,

Keeping my pistol in view
Just for luck,
For I shoot quick and true
As you lack pluck,
So beware,
Lose not a trick to tread the air,
Toe in tune and have a care
For this new circumstance:
I whistle while you up and dance!"

'ROUND A CORNER

PRUNE blue has dotted the sky,
 'Round her cottage her magpies fly,
 So perfect this day is in hand and on high;

Out of her cottage she comes—
 Florence—she stops in a vine
Of Bari which stalks and thumbs
 The gable-end in search of shine—
Florence, and she so certainly mine!

'Round the corner I am near
 To watch her coddle her vine and peer
 To see if the grapes are ripe as the year.

Her tiny hand between mellow leaves,
 Her cheek like a leaf of rose as pink,
And she is one, so you would think,
 With all the Beauty the autumn weaves
Under her cottage eaves.

The moment before she came
 I stood in back of a wicker-frame
 Of immaculate flowers with their autumn name.

She is singing—I hear her sing
 My name—dropped ever word so sweet?
Did ever the Oregon ring
 His heartfulness out and so complete
In his branch of cape at the April meet?

"Donald, Come Donald, to me,
The lark is loud in his Bartlett tree
As my heart is loud now it calls to thee!"

Just 'round her cottage corner am I,
I hearken with such delight,
Now for her song, now for her sigh,
I look where the vireos light
To hearken too and keep her in sight.

"Donald, Come Donald, as true
As my heart sings and I wait for you
In my lap of leaves now the grapes are blue!"

Overhead the sky is in prune,
Underneath the leaves are in red
So I may see another June
Is in blow in October instead,
And nothing is gone forever or dead.

"Donald, Come Donald, anear,
Bend to me once a lip and an ear
To know how the shadow you cast is dear!"

How shall I listen longer so?
The moon will look through her pack of cloud
To calm this wind which is shouting loud,
And I must sing to let her know
I am near as my heart can go:

"Only a cottage corner, dear,
Between us this red end of the year
That you may be sure I am here and near."

No word—not a little sound!

Have I frightened my wren away?
Songs in the plum-bush superabound,
Bull-thistle has tunes to play,
But Florence is still as her light of day.

“Hark, for the chorus is ours!

Hark, there are lips to all silent hours!

Oh, hark, and I 'll bring you my soul in the flowers!

'Round the corner I peek and I spy—

I must be wary, hearts are shy!

You touch your bush and the wren will fly,

So I keep my place and I sing—

The wren will hark to my caroling:

“Am I not come to you now

As the lark has come, and I know how

My heart is there in your roundabout-bough?”

Once I look again I see

What a bunch of drupes she has plucked,

Her fullest cluster of Lipari

Right where the tongue of the sun is tucked—

How well I know they are meant for me!

“So here is this flower to you,

As here is my heart for each way true

Like my flower wears the pink and the white of you!”

Light is her step as winds are light

Which only creep through the grass—

She comes my way, and never a kite

Or daffodil but takes delight

To step aside to let her pass.

One more step and we are one
As daffodil and surprising sun
Were matched before kingdoms were begun!

Like a flash we are together,
Heart upon heart, soul within soul;
The saffron and its feather
Make not such perfect whole,
Nor clover pink and clover now!

To hold for one and forever,
Nothing there to untie or sever,
Just as the ending of love is never.

Nothing is left to thought,
Nothing to time or earth!
More is of spirit wrought
Than ever your life was worth!
Speak we would, yet the words are not—
Bounden beyond the speech of thought!

TWO KINDS OF LOVE

ALL as I would have said it he said it,
For better, for worse;
His plump hot heart went straight to his credit,
Had to be shrivelled to death
To draw in a new breath,

For she loved him—that came clear from her eyes
At the fountain's edge
With one strip of black where the white wave dies;
Loved him, quite in the new small way
Of her world of to-day.

Her life was made up of smallest things,
Thoughts of an hour,
With which the whole heart of each world-girl rings,
Or of most of them, counting the curls
And doll-dreams of your girls.

Yet she loved him—that is one strange thing, too,
In face of it all,
How souls will be false and can yet be true:
Love lifting up, earth dragging back
To get more than its snack.

Every roundabout way to get at it,
Mild-mannered at first,
She tried, with her fine young sense, so that it

Was how to train up her side hair
To each cheek, and as fair;

To unbutton her bodice lower down
Than her neighbor's wife,
Show the shoulders from white to brown,
Arms naked to draw up an elbow tight
Till the skin should choke white.

Next came her stoop, meant to conquer by force,
Till a blush popped out
Of each cheek, her signal of hot remorse;
She was playing the weak first game
Of a shuffle with shame.

And so unfair to the other girl there
So much finelier made,
That she should be left to each every day care
To not make her most of her charms
'Round the pits of the arms.

To get him, there was the end first in life;
What mattered the rest?
He should be master, she shall be wife;
Enough, counting bread and brood,
The three tops of all good.

First, so, to get him, as here was her lie
To bring it about:
She could step with him from low to high,
Be one with him, quite as his slave,
Half as great, all as brave.

Five gold bangles out of her hair
Shall be hidden away,
A plainer dress with a carelesser care

Shall hang about her this day
To put words into play.

What could the lie matter, so she should win,
Since the end is all;
What 'tough her chalky cheek tingled with sin?
Counted her carnation lip not enough
If it pleaded for love?

Did she love him, 'i faith, what more of earth
Could he ask to think?
What more are gold-painted planets worth,
Held fast where their galaxies swing,
Than their warmth which they bring?

This world is to live in and much to gain
By bitter or sweet;
To have and to hold it will not be vain;
Life gave it, death knocks it away
By the splash of a day.

To feast, cook knowledge, pile up gold
Is kingliness crowned;
While to hunger, keep simple, grow true and old
Make losses, and nothing in sight
But the plain way and right.

With power to do all a world could do,
Make much out of naught,
Pile thrones upon slaughter, turn old to new,
And what should the rest of it count
How he managed to mount?

So she would have fashioned him new that day,
Small matter how small;
Less of spirit, more of the clay

Shaped man to the cut of her skill
And mould of her will.

But his sight was double, so he could see
How two worlds are one;
How whatever is points what is to be,
And not an end, not the loss
Of a crown by a cross.

To do the true thing to be done is great,
Small matter the end,
Since comes no end to a path which is straight;
Only your crooked way will run
Back to where it begun.

Not what he gained, but what he gave was his,
His best he had;
What may a man give the world more than this,
Or what is there else he shall keep
When he drops off to sleep?

She would have turned his world into gold,
Gold back into world;
Such barter is life, the practice is old,
And he should be kept to his place
At the foot of his race,

Where she should love him for that he had done,
Nor for that that he was,
'Though men are more than the race they run—
More than all that a man may miss
Is the man that he is.

At his garden-edge where honey-birds pause
For a flower-bed's breath
Of pomegranate, under green lace gauze,

Two Kinds of Love

They stopped where he plucked her a flower
From his cinnamon bower,

Where he held her face between his palms,
Close in to his own,
Would have drawn her all into his arms
And his heart and soul that night,
Letting go wrong and right,

When his bower-vines broke the new moon's rays,
So sifted them through
As to scatter gold coins out over her face,
Put two on the lids of her eyes
As they do when one dies.

Caught him a thought of the other girl there
So much finelier made,
Her way she died, yet turned more fair,
Like spirit which stands for most worth,
Once freed from the earth;

How once she loved him for that he was,
Counted him up
Among treasure beyond his green lace gauze,
Value of gianter good
Than bread just and brood.

He could see her white lips hold their grace
Like lilies in Fall,
White as her thin hand under her face
Now she gave up the world to his keep
To drop off to sleep;

How, too, she bade him take his place,
Keep his topmost soul
Of man-make square to the front of his race

To fight there for truth up to last,
Till this time-life be past;

Not to forget her, fashion her dead,
For one blue clear day
Where the stonechat nests, violets wed,
He should find her to have her again
Among sun-spots and rain;

Words she once chimed to him now were there
To ring at his heart;
One way the dead have of showing their care!
The untongued, fine faunfooted word
To always be heard.

Naught to see or hear is out there
Among silent worlds;
Only the spirit of things is fair;
My pear-flower only speaks out
When I am about.

She leaned at the gate of his garden there,
Looked into his face;
One strip of smilax knotted her hair
To toy at her troublesome brow,
For her sentence was now:

All as I would have said it he said it,
Letting go her face
Where the moon was now trying to edit
A vision that souls have turned cold
'Round the burning of gold:

"For all she was I have kept her all;
To think of her now,
To have her again at my spirits' call

Is the life of me, tell as you will
How her whisper is still.

"Her comrades in arms for their country's cause
Were dropped by the way
Just where the sting of the fever was
As the hell-spitting furnace of thirst
Till death did its worst.

"Her stand she took in the forefront there,
One message of life,
Nor breath of fear, heart made of care
For all as she knelt by their side,
Took the fever and died.

" 'Better so,' she said, 'now a last breath came,
Since my work is done!
My man will find in me nought to blame,
As he might have done one weak day
Had I chosen to stay.

" 'So, too, will he see what path I took,
What hope I kept,
One wide-open truth I ne'er forsook:
Great souls, at the top of their worth,
Bear away from the earth.

" 'So he will follow me, that I know,
In time, which is short,
The one way narrow, the way I go,
And soon he shall have me again
Among sun-spots and rain.'

"To love her now she is that far away
As to not return;
To hold to her, follow her day and day,

Is the life of me, tell as you will
How her whisper is still.

"To love, to be loved by her now as then,
The while she is gone;
To work by no hope of any gain,
Above fear, for the love I bring,
Is the love I sing.

"To be great were greater than such success
As your world may know;
What counts the world only, more gain or less,
Now soul may out-captain it all
Above gainway or fall?

"There 's my foremost high best which is mine;
What matters the rest?
The way is to what is more lasting fine,
Since soul, at the top of its worth,
Bears away from the earth."

ANTIPODES

I

HIDEOUS

WHAT a horrible sound was this?—
Hark, thought I, what 's gone amiss
Now I lay by my sluggard-embers,
Night like a flock of wild Decembers,
 Each wind a shriek
 Sharp-ended weak,
But over and above the wind
 This sound,
Now overhead, now underground,
Seemed like it wailed and gnashed and grinned—
Oh, what a horrible sound!

What a terrible night was loose
To rip and plunge like a maddened moose!
One would think there could be no hearing
More than the snort of wind and sneering
Whine against the glass
 Like the beagle has,
Till straight above the wind was heard
 One cry,
One certain mixture of snarl and sigh
As if the pits of hell were stirred—
Oh, what a pitiless cry!

To the window I rushed to see—
Nothing there save a lashing sea
Of storm which had fallen to pelting
Earth like the very heavens were melting—

I could see spits of fire
Lick the cathedral-spire;

One church-front-window grinned and scowled,
One sound

Rushed like a curse from underground,
Whistled and shrieked and sobbed and howled—
Oh, what a horrible sound!

My room I darkened to see,
Eyes closed so soul could be free—
The within light which gets small showing
If your cathedral-gold be glowing—

When came one view

Would master you

Past all your believing to know,

Past thought,

What hideousness in the heart is wrought,
What monster vilenesses come and go—
Oh, what a terrible thought!

It was Gregory-Day—church-bells
Bellowed like a swarm of hells
Through night and storm now I lay trying
To see, by dark, whence came such crying,

Such horrible yell

Like a devil's bell,

When peered above my window-sill,

Outside,

Two eyes, such eyes as lived and lied
To kill, hungered and glistened to kill—
Oh, how they flickered and lied!

A hag of one frightfullest face,
No part but was out of place,
No teeth, yet monster-fact for wonder,
Tusks, like a condor's claw, shot under
 And out of her chin,
 Each end turned in
Like the laps of her yellow hide,
 While there
Out of the skull in place of hair
Cropped toad-horns—murder boiled inside—
Oh, what a vulture was there!

Hers was the yelping thrapple-cry,
One dreadfulest fear to die—
But what of that wild sorrow-throbbing
Which wailed so, like sweet souls were sobbing?—
 What, thought I, could she
 Throstle threnody,
When, straight against the sky there took
 To flight
Such hosts of infants there was light
Like heaven—scarcely could I look—
Oh, what a wonderful sight!

Poor martyred little infant ones,
Nothing once, now stars and suns,
Straight above storm and thistle climbing
Where I could hear their bell-hearts chiming
 Into song, such tear-song
For so small life, so great wrong—
 Their lot
That they should have wholly missed
Love in the world which found them not,
Never once smiled at nor once kissed—
Oh, what a terrible thought!

Gregory Day—he made for what
Lotted you your sorrow-lot:
Priests for fathers had never known you
—They could not wed, so would not own you—

Noble mighty men,
Holy spirit men!—

So you must be disowned to make good,
For love

Of church below, God above,
Their claim to soul and heavenhood—
Oh, what a terrible love!

Gold, of course, made the thing in view,
More gold, nor a thought of you,
So their blood-altars should certain rise,
And you there for pretty sacrifice!

Are there none to speak?
Is your whole world weak?

God, is there no man-heart left
To swing

One blow at hellishness, to ring
Hate on the murder of it and theft?
Oh, what a terrible thing!

The hag went down—I saw her go
Into tumbling undertow
Of darkness, two claw hands up-reaching
For the gold-heap, throttle screeching

Hate and fear—I knew

What was worst was true:

She was wailing for that she lost,
Her hold

On the hell-horde of bloodied gold
She captured at such mighty cost—
Oh, what a truth was told!

What cherubim!—I saw them rise
 Like soul-sweet against the skies
 To put their new hearts happy-throbbing
 Where is nor priestliness nor sobbing
 Nor worshipping
 Nor silencing,
 But love just, whole high-hearted love
 Of Light,
 Love, which is King by force of Right
 In earth below, in worlds above—
 Oh, what a wonderful sight!

Your church remains, its gold is here,
 And the worst of it is clear:
 Gregory Day and a crime is doing,
 Child and mother make the whole ruing,
 While your glutton priest
 Counts the crime the least
 With a Savior tucked in behind—
 All 'round
 Is church-chime baying like a hound,
 Chant for cheat and for God combined—
 Oh, what a horrible sound!

II

BEAUTIFUL

Dying!—I saw she was dying now—
 All about her house was still
 From each rowan-bough
 To her window-sill;
 Save only once had the air
 Broken through the blind to where
 She was dying to drop her a song
 Her field-lark carried the dull day long.

Fairest sweet Edna Grace was dying—
The wide silent sorrow-room

Where she was lying

Held such hollow gloom

I felt, too, as if I must go

Her way, which she seemed to know—

You know how it is, on such a day,

If love go, how hard it is to stay.

And she was all otherwise than those

Who look for a chance to keep,

To themselves and close,

What gain they may reap;

She kept her way, through and through,

To be kind and fearless-true

And doing, with this one bosom-thought:

Self last, truth first, so that the best be wrought.

And so she would not listen to you

Who would tell her what is best,

Settle what is true

By your altar-test,

Knowing there is more in this,

That a man be what he is,

His way, his thinking, his wholly best,

Than he wear your skull so God be blest.

So was it she took not once one look

From the pit-bottom view

Of your missal-book

To know what is true,

Nor twisted knots in her knees

For worship to try to please

One Infinite God—she kept to her way,

Her natural free whole self-noble play,

Antipodes

For Beauty stands first, while each has his own
To bring to light in his way,
 Not yours which is known
 By the threat and pay—
Each flower has its tint to catch,
No Beauty was made to match—
For that she came to be what she was,
No part of your tongue-split parrot-cause.

No priest-hawk once ever closed his hold
On her own thoughtfullest heart,
 On her soul and gold
 By his Petrine art—
Just this was her apostle:
Each soul is meant to throstle
Its own song, unlap its own feather,
And small thought of your dull "why" or "whether."

The Beauty of all of it was this,
Was her beautiful death,
 While the meaning is
 That as each new breath
I part with must sudden rise
Above me, against all skies,
So my last must, if great or small,
Bear soul up, the Beauty of it all,

For now, as there she lay and I thought
Her dead, as the white new face
 Looked like marble wrought,
 So not a trace
Of earth was left at the brow,
Just the pale clear dawn there now,
Sudden she raised her head like one
Would look from the tomb after life is done.

The blue deep eyes started open wide—
I could not see what she saw,
 'Though I harked and eyed
 Through the corridor
Where she looked—nothing was there
Save her wondrous Beauty-stare
Now I caught her whisper—she could see
What she said was there plain wondrously—

All Beauty just, but only the kind
Which touches soul at its best,
 Above eye or mind—
 There was manifest
A new other kind of light
Like a strange Shining of Right—
Then there was song, such marvel-song
As might have been a requiem for wrong.

Girl and boy were we once in the grasses,
Honeysuckle time was then,
 And 'though life passes
 To come not again,
I go back to that first spring
Of joy-leap, of gathering
Cress and crocus—how now it is plain
My spring, my love will one day come again!

“Beautiful”—there was her last word, nought more—
Nothing ever she had seen
 Or heard before
 Or dreamed of e'en—
Beauty all about her fair
As the white sweet face—right there
She looked once where the stars were in dawn,
Then her whole heart to me and she was gone.

CASSANDRA SOUTHWICK

I

HAND-GYVE her—you knew how
 That last flesh-pinch you gave her arm
To make her wince you one low poor bow
 Would send new pain-shots to each palm
To put them flying for no control
 Of such gentle soul.

II

Body-strip her up and down
 Of the pale gray gown
To give your pea-shape eye the glut
 And glisten of a mariput,
But dodge those moon-eyes so wondrous sad,
 Or mark you this my word,
They 'll yet fork-fasten to drive you mad.

III

Tuck a right sleeve up your elbow-pit—
 Wise of you to think of it,
Lest those new lips you will make
 Might open on you to hiss and spit
One blood-spot for her sake
 To stick to you—never mind her hurt,
'Though you drop your soul, so you save your shirt!

IV

Tear-time was now for her,
 Yet you could not see an eye-fibre stir
Nor lip-end, not so much as lurks
 Inside your red rat-heart, so drop your smirks
To come to time to whet a lash
 For love of God and the open gash.

V

To the rope-end knot a new knot
 For blood-sucking emphasis,
Your one kind of forget-me-not
 And the thing dates back to Genesis—
Oh, mind not her, now you have her pinned;
 You know great hearts, so you know she sinned—
Have not a care, she will stand as straight
 As a rib in your prison garden-gate.

VI

Drop out your bumbledom
 To come to the lash—count not one stripe
To see if a single welt be ripe
 For another to prop up Christendom,
Since you have one written Council order
 To deal what cut-licks you can afford her
Now you have done with her stricken mate
 You tried to kill, I would think, for hate
Of such spirit-grace
 In his white fine face.

VII

Your stew-stomach, potted cheek,
 My pop-joy friend

Of voice for such little chalky squeak
No soul is in it to try to speak,
And you will hide-redden, gut-broaden
To see such righteousness heel-trodden—
The dog in you, say I, jaw-snappy,
While all the while
Your front teeth show like a chalk-mark smile
Of mean mouth-pleasantness, crack happy.

VIII

You knew the truly true truth,
A one way to think, you had it right,
While she was wrong, so in with a tooth
To rip her heart out for noble spite!
There 's God to serve, Christ to treat
Like he were half knuckles to strike
The lip out of a songing shriek
To cock an ear to his dying bleat!

IX

Your mood-militant is not her mood,
Only this thought, that good is good,
Small odds how she prays to seal it
So her way be to act and feel it,
To never mind your trick to trap
A sinner in an altar-flap
To make a slave of him, soul and head,
Good as dead.

X

Winter is on—you scatter her brood,
Her young about her—I saw her sheep

Would wither in the underwood,
 Her young sweet-gum-tree drop asleep
And winter at it by claw and nail
 To tear the pith out—her lip is pale
For thought of those she left a day ago
 Whom you will scatter to an eastern snow.

XI

Yet was it yesterday I saw
 You cluck at a priest, put out your claw
To fumble at his rochet-button,
 One hand fast to his flap-alb-end
Now I could see you wince to bend
 Each eye to Heaven like a vulgar glutton.

XII

Her garden is blasted,
 Purple azalea, convolvulus blue
Are gone, not a bee-leaf lasted,
 Yet here is one fact for you;
I saw you this same evening here
 Dip a whisper in a prayer-book's ear,
Come to your knee-down to palaver
 With God for a word with him
To put your case clean, conscience trim,
 And she—the devil himself could have her.

XIII

Still must she join your crew
 For love of God and to be as you,
Or stick to such righteousness as prints
 All soul there in her sweet-eyed glints

To take the worst of it—you
With your hog-eyed gulp and stomach-stew.

XIV

You knew truth—here 's the thing—
Truth hides its sweet to let slip a sting
Like a snooded rose, so on with your smites
Of whip-lash to cut like an adder bites
And you have it for just the thing,
You keep your sweet to let slip the sting.

XV

Look now to the satin hand
Which you will not find in your land
For shape so like a tulip-leaf,
Vein-forked as a tree of maidenhair,
Yet will not beckon you to be brief
Or lighten your blows, such soul is there
To know a way to grow on grief
Past all circumference of belief
To one templed over-blue and as fair.

XVI

Draw blood on her, one clear drop
To give your prison-dust for sop
And, lo, I see whole lilies spring
To circle earth like an evening ring,
Whited as the spirit-hand,
To flock for flying in your land
That men may catch her word
How, thrust as you will this life-side out
For faith or doubt,
The soul of her shall be seen and heard.

XVII

Gentle sweet lady, how you would come
To put your persecutors dumb
For joy to know they could while
One instant in your agate smile,
And you not looking back
Where thought was fierce, bosom black,
You who forgive—while I
Who could not say them one mouth-mild thing
For knowing of their whip and sting,
Oh, learn me how to live and die!

THE QUESTION

I

SHALL I ask it?

I saw her lip
Shut firm and level as a casket—
I saw her slip
One wink, I thought,
For a true snap-shot
At the other one there
Of chin-whisker style,
Smooth and sharp as his razor-smile,
Tulips in his garden hair.

II

There 's the question
A man will think
Perhaps, for luckiness, he best shun;
One tiny wink
Might print a book
Of her volume-look,
All the other one got,
On the face of things,
Yet how I envied him then his lot,
How an eyelash-arrow stings!

III

I saw her pose,
 And no mistake,
Two lips like ends of a Plymouth rose
 For him to take,
As there he stood
In his kingdom-mood
To know he could tell,
By a blink of her eye,
How all with him in the world was well
 Once he saw her pass me by.

IV

Next, then, the dance—
 And now I knew
The hour was come I must miss my chance—
 His step was true,
Eye strong and clean
As planet-sheen—
How, too, he would dip
To swing him and yield
Like a strip of wheat in a breezy field,
 The two nearly lip to lip!

V

And I so short,
 So little built
For jacketing of the piefinch sort
 I must take the jilt—
What else is to do?
If I only knew

The Question

What her thought was there
In the breast inside
Where the soul of a sweet girl tries to hide,
Might be I would not care.

VI

Next just outside
At the balcony
They perched for a place to try to hide,
He falcony,
She more, I thought,
Like a pigeon caught
Now I saw her smile
At his handsomest face
Like moonlight nests in my garden-place,
While I watched them there the while,

VII

A moon to deck
Her brow, her hair,
Put a new gold band about her neck
To kindle there
Two tourmalines,
To fire their fins
To fly, to rise,
As if they could fit
Their light to her smile and the soul in it,
Or rival those spirit-eyes!

VIII

And then—well, then,
I must away
To the lot of disappointed men,
Nor stop to say

How I could not blame
(I forget his name)
My man of the chin
Like a plumber's file
For taking her, faith first, at her smile
Of eyes, which was sure to win.

IX

Her garden-gate
Gaped open wide
As if to tell me the hour was late
And my chance beside;
Yet how to go,
How to leave her so?
Or how could I stay
Just to see him chase
My luck out with his maple-tree grace
And lord-look and dimple-play?

X

As there I stood
Against the moon
To hark, in my silent sorrow-mood,
To the rigadoon,
Came there, I thought,
'Though I saw it not,
Just a touch at my hand
From the dark behind,
One warm kind touch, like a kiss of wind,
Which seemed so to understand;

XI

Came then one word:
"Could you not trust?"—

The Question

'T was all I wanted, 't was all I heard
 In a whisper just—
And there her sweet soul
Had told me the whole—
What need was to task it
To language things more
And her sky-eyes there with their spirit-score?
 The question?—what need to ask it?

ROSALIE

I

HERE's to spring-spread of wing,
Lack-a-lack,
New leafing of toppy white wing,
The blow of a rose
For one look, then to close—
Alas and alack
Was it gone that soon
Like the wink of a moon,
And I thought Would it never come back?

Youth 's my master, and the landlord thing
Says youth is the only ripening.

II

Here 's to summer to run,
Lack-a-day,
In daffodowndilly for crops of sun,
One leap-up to laugh
For a snoodful of chaff,
An armful of play,
And the chuckle is gone
Like a cheek of dawn—
Is there nothing just over the way?

A king is summer, and says the king
Summer 's an end of ripening.

III

There 's my Rosalie, too,
For a day
Of her dawn-fed summerly lake-eye blue
To flash me her star
Through more kinds of far
Than spaces display,
And she too to go
Like a papilio—
Would she never come back for a day?

A year is past, summer is on,
Small summer and my Rosalie gone!

IV

Winter, too, at its breath
Of farewell,
Face put up like a mask of death
To turn to a sky
Which appears, too, to die,
To prove how all is well
To no end of black
And the stars in back
And my Rosalie there as well.

More is an eyeful of spirit worth
Than the whole fire flash-up of suns and earth.

V

So it is true I know,
Past a doubt,
My Rosalie 's more than your sky-land glow,
More than I could see
For the eyes of me

By looking about,
Since a glow is there
Of soul which is fair
Beyond speaking or all finding out.

Pin you you may to this one true thing,
There 's more than one kind of ripening,

VI

For take her blue wide eyes
For a trace
Of shine I see in no suns or skies,
For a leap of soul
Through one glistening whole
Of such garden grace
As would point a way
To pick soul out of clay,
Two dew-lights hung in her bell-flower face.

My heart drums it no heart is for vain,
'Though my Rosalie come not back again.

VII

There, then, is how I know,
Forsooth,
'T were better I follow to find her so
Like a leaf of light
To have taken flight
Above month and youth
And eyesight and sound
And this feast of ground
To make the most of one perfect truth:

Man is leaf and fruit of the thing
Since he fades while soul is ripening.

A MONK IN MONOTONE

THE dear God knows why I am here
 Between these walls;
What save my honest conscience calls
 For love and fear
Of him who rules the nations to the end
 That men may bend?

He knows my reason why I came,
 With new-made heart,
To dignify, by cloistered art,
 His holy name,
To bend my back to keep such solemn trust
 Because I must.

No worldly thought to enter in
 To dwarf my soul,
For I intend to keep it whole
 And free of sin,
Shut up where tempters may not come to test,
 And life is rest.

Here will I put this world aside
 To do his praise
By doing nothing all my days
 But hum and stride
Where selfless souls, ere me, have tuned and trod
 The way to God.

I brought no other thought or hope
 In coming here
Than just to make my title clear
 Where others grope,
By living up aloof from other men
 In cloistered ken.

By giving up such lively earth
 To pass my days
Where morning never trailed its rays,
 Where death is birth,
May I not hope to win my wings to soar
 The shining shore?

What Heaven that is not labored for
 Stands worth the name?
An empty gift, or much the same,
 Which quits no score,
'Though one short life for endless joy, by trade,
 Were overpaid.

I may not learn to love my Lord
 Among these cells,
More hideous than a hundred hells
 In one accord;
Yet will he hold his children twice as dear
 Who stoop to fear.

Yet had I thought of more than this
 In coming here,
That I might bring my blessed cheer
 Of benefice
To one poor soul hard put to keep her way
 In life's dismay.

She, for example, who has been
Beset, besought
By men who hold her soul at nought,
Mere worldish men;
Even she in arms as mother, wife, or pet
Might God forget.

Heaven knows I only want her here
For love of God,
That she may learn to feel his rod,
To stoop, to fear,
To put this world and ground-thoughts straight away
'Till Judgment Day!

By saving her I save my soul,
I 'm sure of that;
I keep her, too, from a two-toed rat,
An eyeless mole,
Who roots his palaces in unlit sod
Apart from God.

One day, if God approve of me,
Life being past,
May be I may have her then, at last,
Where souls are free,
As compensation for my generous care
Of one so fair!

THE SHARK AND THE LARK

AN ALLEGORY

THIS story they told in ancienty:

A man grew down in the deepest sea

By himself there, so wondrously alone

None knew ever how he was grown

To come there, or how he came to be

A citizen of the sea.

Sea-cobble made his walk

Where he should lounge or stalk

Till it was strange to think

How, having not a fin,

Nor puff of wind he could drink in,

He could neither rise nor sink

As little came to him to do

In sea-deep, for nought he knew

Of what was about him or above him

Save the great waters to shape and shove him

Under where he must pickle and sleep

In the salted deep.

What was for him to pull or taste

Out of such stupendous waste?

Scarce was a purpose he could touch

Or happening he could try to clutch

But water, only water about,

Still waters, never ever a pout

The Shark and the Lark

Or wink at him to say
 They knew any pleasant play
To tickle, to put him laughing—
 For him came only dreary quaffing
Of Power, an ocean of frown
 To crowd him, hold him down,
To bind him, shin and foot,
 So he should bungle to stalk,
Fetch the toe-tumble of a coot,
 Pick and waddle like a fork,
Nor think of it once to know
 He was not meant to be shackled so.
Being man-fashion-made he knew
 Somewhat of a thing or two
Of what he could be coming to
 Could he once find a way to tower
Above such wholly water-power
 As pinned his arms, boxed his brain
Till thought in him snapped all in vain.
 Completely subjugated was he,
Hope was drowned, life was drossy,
 For nowhere was where he could go,
Nothing was what he could know
 In emptiness of endless waters
And not a sign of sons or daughters
 Himself-like, of whom to learn,
Not a creature to whom to turn,
 Himself never to strike one blow
For mastership to greaten to grow
 To somewhat more than he saw
Made one handcuff water-law.
 Which way soever he sought to head,
Water made his garden-bed;
 Whichever way he sought to look

To compass other than what he saw,
 Find a thing worth living for,
 Tap a snapdragon or a book,
 Just the one thing he could see,
 Taste, touch, smell, or be,
 Polliwig-like in a brook,
 A man in the gut-rule of the sea.
 Power had him—he could not bend
 To purpose, make to any end
 Such life had—he could not see
 Thought to grow to or thing to be
 Save clam-like to drink his sky
 Of ocean all overhead,
 Flap his mud-path under foot,
 Ply the wing-work of a newt
 To find him a place to die—
 All his soul in him mostly dead.

CHORUS OF SHARK

Up to you now,
 Polish your pins,
 Give us the vow
 To think less
 Of your shins,
 To play chess
 With your fins—
 Up to you now
 Any way,
 Any how
 Which you may!
 Flap your pins
 Into fins,
 Wallop arms
 Into palms,

Twist the things
Into wings
As you hark
To the shark!
Up to you now,
There 's a way
To know how
To unclay,
There 's a thing
You could do
By a wing
If you knew—
There 's a way
And a view
Of the skies
If you knew
How to rise—
Up to you now
Heel and brow,
Paddle fins
Till motion
Begins,
Till ocean
Unpins,
Cut a way
Through the dark
Up to day
As you hark
To the shark—
You the man,
You 've a now!
And a span,
You 've a soul
And you can—

Take to smacks
 Above sculp,
 Sticklebacks,
 Take to tracks
 Above pulp,
 Above bars,
 Get a gulp
 Of the stars!

There he harkened and learned,
 There he bosomed and burned
 To be up, to put might
 To the thought to take flight
 Beyond slime, above cephalopod
 To conquer his water-power God,
 Crush under foot-fall so as to cower
 A whole ocean of Power.
 Flap went his palms to the finger-nibs,
 Elbows sharpened to dig his ribs
 As there by one little shoulder-motion
 He begun to climb in the ocean,
 Begun, by his wing-work, to put
 His grave of waters under foot.

SHARK

Up to you now,
 Hark to the shark,
 Stick to your vow,
 Strike at your mark,
 Nor you count
 It for far
 So you mount
 To a star

The Shark and the Lark

For a mark,
And you hark
To the shark!

Light slips in, dark ducks out,
Power has less of venom-pout
As he rises, learns how to prop
Seas overhead to bursting top.
Up to him now—now he comes to pass
Where sun tears the sea into stripes of thread,
Buckles them into drops of glass
—How they grow olive, claret-red!—
And now for a first time he knew
Beauty could tear a sea in two.

SHARK

Up to you now,
Mind you the shark,
Every way how,
Every way hark:
Out of your crib
Pick a way up,
Rattle your rib,
Fight a way up
Nor you stop
Till you get
To the top
Of all wet—
Have a care
To the sheen
Which is there
In between,
That you keep
Your one way

Up the steep,
Up to day,
That you stop
Not to see
If a drop
Of it be
Any red,
Any blue—
Overhead
Is for you
Wholly blue
If you knew,
Red and gold
In it too—
Have a hold,
Have a care
Not to stop
Anywhere
For a prop
On the stair
Of the sea—
Everywhere
Is to be,
Is to do,
Everywhere
Is the red
And the blue
Overhead
And for you!

Heavy was the sea to hold him tight,
Push as he could, elbow as he might;
Power was one purpose to hold him down:
He should govern mightiness or drown,

The Shark and the Lark

Nor chance to him to dodge or juggle,
Fist-first headed for just the struggle
To force him to widen to breathe,
Tread the tough waters underneath.
Night was on, each star was out
Now he drew near the upper end
Where the sea begun to split and bend
Into scowl, spit froth and pout.
One star first he saw, then two,
Tongues of copper and lapis-blue,
Then a whole eye-face of skies
Looked the look down never dies.

SHARK

Up to you now,
Hold to your vow—
There 's the beach
Within reach;
Now is night,
Soon is dawn,
Fetch a span,
Take to flight
If you can;
Soon is morn,
Soon a man
Will be born
To the world
To be hockled
And cockled
And pearled—
Take a leap
From the deep
To the deep,

Take a view
Of the blue
And the red
Overhead—
Beauty there
On the beach
Within reach,
Which is fair,
Which is rare
As a fold
Of the gold
Of her hair—
See the girl,
See her there
As she waits
Like a pearl
In the gates
Of the sky
For you there
With an eye
Like a lip
Of the moon,
With a lip
Like an eye-pit
Of June!
Up to you now
To your vow,
To the girl
Within reach,
To the pearl
On the beach!

What now, what was to think or tell
As there for his first time he saw

The Shark and the Lark

Beauty, the thing worth climbing for,
Beauty, like soul's eternal spell,
Beauty above him and around
From sun-God to Sun-wonder ground?
Chick-like he broke his shell
Of ocean to make way
Upward into amazing day
Of tree-leaf, choristry, sky-fire,
Seeming to beckon him one notch higher
Above lavender in each field,
Lark-eyed song, purple yield
Of zinfandel, little sparks
Of dew to laugh while the lilac harks,
A sky of sun-dust to make night
Only one new finer kind of light.
There he was now at her feet
To kiss the sand her foot-fall stirred—
Only his talking heart was heard,
So full his soul was, so complete
Her Beauty there where she stood
Against the sun for a yellow hood
Knotted so in ribbons of leven
One would think she was half in heaven—
There he gathered in each hand
Each footstep she left in the sand
Once he saw the sea reaching through
To gather the same footsteps too.
Up she beckoned him to rise,
To draw nearer her lips and eyes,
And—
Now hand in hand they were off
To the woods, to the fields,
Fruitful and never enough
Which such love-time yields—

Up to the edge of a stream,
 Down in the deep to look
 As there like a printed dream
 Found in a picture-book
 He knew her image in the brook,
 Her rose-bush lips, her melted eyes
 Deep in the stream where they stopped,
 As if she had dropped
 From the skies—
 Then came his wonder-thought,
 Was she or was she not
 Like as the dorn,
 Water-bred, water-born,
 Or as there was her red, her blue
 In the sky, like her too,
 Was truth of it this: did she spring
 From the sky like a wing?—
 Or, had he made his mistake
 When he essayed to forsake
 The water where she was
 In its emerald paws?—
 Right as he looked apace
 In the stream at her face,
 Right as he looked, while she saw
 Her image was what he angled for,
 Sudden she turned her lips his way,
 Her eyes too, as if to say:
 “I love you—what do you see
 In the brook there for gree?
 Will you not have one look to me?
 Nothing my image is in the stream,
 Like me 'though the picture seem;
 Up to you now, have a look to see
 For fair how you like the looks of me!

The Shark and the Lark

“Come away,
Here 's the breath of a day,
Come to me,
Here 's a world you shall see!
Here 's a pocket of soul to unclay—
Come away!

“Flesh and blood
For an end of all good—
Blood and lip
For the sake of a sip—
Mark how the daffodil-wing is trued,
Dyed and dewed!

“Cheek or chest
And the thing is for best—
Here 's to blood
For an end of all good—
Beauty to have and to hold and love,
Nothing above!

“To the lark
And his song in the park!
To the flower
That will die in an hour!
Seize you the thing in life which is fair,
Have a care!

“To the field
For its blossomy yield!
To the lip
For a hungering dip!
Beauty to have and to hold and love,
Nothing above!”

Hand in hand they were off
 To pick their way in meadows,
Hark to the grassquit in his trough
 Of sun-wash, see him dodge the shadows
Of a quince, then shuttle in and out
 To fetch his joy-warble to a shout.
Over beyond was fenugreek,
 Costmary, squirrel-squeak
For welcome, his pretty way to shout
 His afternoonful part,
Rhapsody of one flooded heart
 For joy just, past all thinking out.
Next about him and all around
 Hung each glistening dew-bell
In the grasses like a bluebell
 Till he thought the stars were in the ground.
Fineness, such fineness as could blink
 Out of each little planet-wink
Held him in arms—high madrigal
 Of silver wind and waterfall
Caught his soul, each new dance
 Of fly-life put him into trance,
While over and above them all
 Was she there, who kept her show-peach cheek
To picture what she could not speak,
 One eye-light of preternatural
Fireful longing of endless love,
 Nought like it, no one thing above
To so capture his wealth of soul
 As now to seem like the rounded whole
Of star-life, anemone, rainbow-rod,
 One supremest daughter of God
For man just—now he is up
 At her lip—a flower at the dew will sup—

The Shark and the Lark

Everywhere and all ways and now
He is fast at her cheek and brow
As heart points and soul knows how
To look such Beautifulness through
To seize her very soul there too—
There in their starlight hour,
Each to each, like sun and flower
For Majesty of heart to heart,
All soul-world, souls not meant to part
In any kind of smashing weather,
Else why should they have come together?—
All his is she, all his love,
All air is his and to breathe,
One sky-sweep of worlds above,
One burst of blossom underneath—
His, his, to have it, to keep it,
His just so that he may reap it,
All sky one inverted wonder-cup
To empty, and he to fill him up—
Lover and field and friend
And potful and there an end—
Did he not outgrow the sea
To compass land and hand and sky
From bottom-deep to endless high?
What more is to think of to be?

Right as they were bounded there
Overhead by planeted sky,
Underneath by the thoroughfare
Of pimperlins and palms,
East and west by each other's arms,
Lip against lip, sigh for sigh
In their sweet evening about to die,
One soul there 'twixt face and face

And clinging to its hiding place
 Like a tear-drop in a last embrace,
 Sudden there flew one note from the lark
 As he mounted his star-way up the dark:

THE LARK

Up to you now,
 This is the wind,
 Think of it how
 The sea has been thinned,
 How the sea
 Was be-finned
 Till it flew!
 Once was the sea,
 Now is the wind,
 Once was the sea
 Whittled and thinned
 Till it flew,
 Till it drew
 Soul and sigh,
 Till it flew
 To the sky!
 Up to you now,
 Clean above earth!
 What is this brow
 Of bed-rock worth?
 Here 's a way
 Above day,
 Above dark
 And you hark
 To a lay
 Of the lark!
 Once were you there

In the sea,
Beginning to be,
Beginning to rise;
Now the air
Is for fair
For the skies,
Now the blue
Is for you
That you rise!
Heavy the sea,
Heavy the air,
Man is to do
And to be
And to dare
To be free
Of the sea
And the air!
Harken to me
As you hark,
Capture the glee
Of the lark!
To the air
Where it thins
And is fair!
To the star
Where it spins
And is far
As Beauty that wins!
To an end
Is never
A way,
And a day
Is forever;
To ascend

Is a goal
Of the soul;
From Beauty that sleeps
As it dies
To Beauty that keeps
To the skies
Bend a wing,
Strike a claw
At the thing,
Not to touch,
Not to clutch
At it, nor
To have it to reap
Or to keep
To recompense
Longing to glut
Any sense,
Any gut—
Small what you get,
All what you are
To grow to yet,
Yon crimson star
Just to be
Beauty the thing,
Just to be
The musical ring
And gold-angled wing
That you see
As I fly
Over sea
Against sky—
Just to be
What you see
Is in me,

Beauty the thing
Of musical wing,
Just to be
Beauty to rise
Over wind and sea,
Over skies,
Beauty to choose
And to lose
Just to be
Beauty the thing
Of philomel-ring,
Star-spotted wing,
Beauty to be!

COR CORDIUM¹

DID he not make the way to you pretty plain,
 Fine Shelley, and such heart-ring in his note
To soar so high, then back again
 Just to set the soul of you afloat,
And you would scarce look to see
 How he was love-lit and true and free?

He took his one way to know what is true,
 Not your way nor any man's, so he came
To be the self and whole of him too—
 What whirlwind behind a lip of flame!
Still scarce you looked and he was gone,
 He that was so much to look upon.

You frowned because he would not beg nor simper
 Nor put a psalm-eyed face up—how odd
He should pipe his lip without a whimper
 And he himself a whole human God!
There 's man to be, man to help,
 So why this meek smirking chancel-yelp?

He was the man of him through and through
 To make for such free play as you see
When a new star pricks the open blue
 To show there are more worlds yet to be,
And, so, more man, one higher sort
 Than you have little that he may be bought.

¹ Inscription above the grave of Shelley.

How he was true—not a small thing mattered
Nor great but he should be all he knew
And straight to it, not as you scattered,
And just for one Godlike love of you—
As if a man shall not be
Great as he may think to feel or see!

As if I am natured to button up
This soul like a body in a jacket
To suit your fashion, pelt and cup,
You to pick the dough-mix so you may pack it,
I to mark toe-time, tap to tap,
Just inside the girdle of your strap!

Free as a bush-bird to wing about
New sky-spaces for random to see
And know and hang to for not a doubt,
Like a white wind laps from sea to sea,
And you thought your cowl-cage wide enough
For him and his no-end of love,

And he the philomel, clean out loud
And flute-noted to such flash of song
As streaked the heavens to split a cloud
And you get the echo back so long
As soulfulness and wholefulness may last,
In spite of your mouth-mock and chancel-caste;

He the white bream in a puddled sea,
Would fling himself out to get more sight
Which blinded soon as he looked to see,
Like a star blinks with glut of light,
Then plunged, as if for love of a grave
And dark once more, in the pitfall wave.

The love of him, too, how that was full
 Like wind-warm June in a school of flowers
It put there, one whole bosomful
 Of his best spring-song-sweetened hours!
Yet you would not hark, 'though his mouth was pearled,
 Passionate rejected lover of a world!

AMONG THE MOONBEAMS

WHAT a night it was, now I passed
Out through my cow-lane pointed east
Into a meadow's moon-ended plot
Of broken brooks—each bog was grassed
And moon-lit to make a feast
For hollow sheep or lorient!
I dogged a path which dogged a hedge
That drew like a lasso 'round the place,
As if to say, for once are you caught,
You and your bog and moon and sedge
For no escape from such sweet embrace,
Whether you will or not!
The path was new with sea-spoon shells,
Moon-spikes through them, while now and then
The pink enamel would unfold
To yellow and curl and close again
Like a ring in a loop of marigold.
Straight as a tulip night stood up,
Each star dropped down one clear plumb line,
Each flower was put like a careful cup
To swallow such opulent shine
As I have not seen in a wealth of years;
All shapes of moon-born shadows
Played with flowers in the meadows:
Pea-bloom, wild hop, bryony;
Suckle-vine toyed with peony;

Bell-wether and bull-bells crossed tinkle,
Heart-leap was through me, forest prime
Was all ears up to catch the chime
And dew-drip of amber sprinkle
To hang a pearl from each harking leaf—
The whole night outlook was past belief
As I was headed to know not where
Nor for what purpose I wandered there
In the moon-painted air.
So comes it and what is it,
Such spirit-footed sense exquisite
Will lead me, put me here or there,
Ask not nor tell me why or how
I duck to it my lowly bow,
Go the one way I thought of least,
Whether it be south or east,
Most like a thrasher from bough to bough
To never know one why or how,
Save all things turn out best
And he comes straight-safe to his nest?
For there at the meadow-end
Where my black pond-brook fetched a bend
To circle and coil and straighten again,
Like a serpent in a twist of pain,
Stood the forest-edge, while just inside,
As if she were trying her way to hide,
Lo, my Rosalie!—who should think
To find her there like a startled bird
Caught bobbing at the gold-eyed brink
Of night, my step once overheard—
And then—what were night-eyes to me then?—
Moon-lush in tulip-spoons were vain
Now I could have my garnet-girl
At her breath of love again!

Down we sat in a clump of moss
To not once think how it happened so
That we should meet, what the meaning was,
Thought not nor cared to know,
Save what I saw in her cheek,
How spirit looks what it may not speak,
And I there with not one word
I could unbottle more than a bird
With not a note that was ever heard.
Sat we heart in hand;
The stars outside were quite forgot,
So were my moon-meadow-plot
And hazel-flower, for one finer land
Soul takes to, puts worlds aside—
Night and all now try to hide
And my sweet girl there, heart and hand,
To prove the one truth—this is it:
Beyond and above all mountain-spit
To pinnacle of hollow air
Is other and deeper Beauty spread,
Soul-sense which put the planets there
And all the spotted sky and red,
Tucked a universe into space
Of blue true head, eye-gold face,
Yet will drop the keen crimson whole,
Star-look, bryony, meadow-nowl
For Beauty in one human soul,
To show, for truth, how soul
Makes finer than the finest whole.
Everything about was changed,
Lavender hedge, globird bob,
Each brook-sweep got rearranged,
My heart struck sharp as if to mob
Breath out of me—call it weak,

Or love or life, what you will,
The very soul of me was that still
I could not speak, I could not speak!
One myrtle-bush, by seeming hap,
Stooped to toying at her lap,
The which she plucked, forked the leaves
On stems, like one who reeves and weaves,
Yet not one word, scarce an eye
My way, so sure she was and shy
Of what she meant to do, while I
Sat watching, throbbing, tried to weave
One thought together to tell her—what?
How I was all Forget-Her-Not
And no other wish, no other thought,
When—not one word I could guess to hear,
Wondered if ever spirit spoke
If freed once from here
And its yester-yoke—
Right where she sat and the moon plunged through
To choke her cheek and to stay there too
As I looked wounded that could not sip
One little breath at the amber lip,
She looped her chain of knotted leaf,
Gave it one gentle toss and brief
About my neck—there was no use,
She had me in her myrtle-noose,
Drew me to her that soft and shy
And slow-like, but so surely, I,
Now lost in her lips and arms and eyes
And heart-rush, seized my prize,
Could have laid me there to die
Now I saw in her worded eyes and cheek
How the angels know and you never speak.

AT A WINDOW

ONE sunbright morning
Out of a cockle-shell sky
Spread like a tattooed awning,
My Annabel and I
In an east-window stood
Up above the world so high
We could look down where men are glued
To the turf, we could look up to the sky.

Sun pelted the glass
As spirit pelts you,
Now to make green stripes pass,
Now to get a quiver of blue,
Till I thought: That way soul
Plunges through me, through you,
To get a shape which is new,
Another kind of foot and nowl,
Get a tone which is true,
Finer than any green or blue,
Unworlded and unbonded too.

There were we in our window-nook
To take one morning look,
She to the world below
For its pimple-fuss of show,
Bronze on each papilio,
Bubbles for their puff and blow,

I to look to my sky
For the silence of it and size,
Such worlds of far-sighted eyes,
To think how far, how high!

Seemed it like we were made
Each for the other that day,
As at the window we played
At thought, and I had this to say:
Vast is the yonder to you,
Mighty sky in gentle blue,
More than you could fathom through—
Is it, then, no part of you?

But each little counts so much,
One atom part of eternity,
Yet is it less than I may see,
Nothing that I may touch!
Mighty more is the soul in you,
'Though it lie in mask, perdue.

I love my swamp of sky,
So far off, so endless high,
Such triumph of sublimity,
Not so much for such greatness there,
For what climbs beyond starways fair,
As that it points a new thing to see,
Vaster than all magnality,
Points me my soul in me.

But she must look down to her world:
There goes a man has been earled,
Nails coppered, knuckles pearled,
Head for most part occiput,
Swings his little pulpit strut,

At a Window

Never larger than his rut
He runs in, while he whispers "tut!"

Now, then, now she looks
Down to her world below
For a smattering of Dukes,
For their pig-track way they go,
Spider-work, backs to bristle
With the kindness of a thistle—
What matters the cold soul in them
If fire fire their pongee-gem?

So much easier to look down,
So much harder to look high,
While there the blue circle of sky
Rests like one perfect crown
Of goldstones in pyramis
Forever on all that is!

In the world are boons to be got,
Pin-trinkets, garden plot,
Moose-bird, clam and pot,
Your world of God and slave,
Your chance royal to play knave,
Hell to threaten, Christ to save—
Yet what goes high as high behavior,
Each one his own God and Savior?

She would let go my hand,
Clutch at the underland
While I held to my ground,
Held to where I stood
By the hold of a hound
In my lifted mood!
Down she would go to earth

For its one-day worth
Of painted grass,
Let my sky-fields pass.

Overhead what was there much?
Worlds with wings on, beyond clutch,
Nothing she could taste or touch,
And so to earth she will go,
Tie to her kadamba tree
For flowers overhead, to see
How they fetch such yellow blow,
Never to learn they do it
By climbing from what is small,
Just by climbing to it—
There 's the secret of life and all!

That way so we parted;
Back to her world she went,
Her ground from which she started,
Left me to my firmament
To look from my window alone,
To look to my amber zone
Where worlds have dwindled while soul has grown.

Always will come to me that morning
Under our tattooed awning,
Her warm voice, her hand in mine,
Her way she looked to me
As if not meaning to see
This leaf of columbine,
The one she tossed to me
As there she went her way—
I sit at my window prone,
Always to look to my amber zone,
And so I look—but I look alone!

JEALOUS

"I KNEW—I could see your look at him
Through the finger-spread tree-box over the way;
See you caliper-map him, limb and limb,
Trace a soul out of clay.

"Only a man on the outer rim
To be mirrored and tape-measured 'round about;
Coat and waistcoat filled spick to trim,
Spirit left out.

"To look at—which was all you could do—
Such strong new face, heart mustered out,
Was enough; his stone-cold features grew
To be perfect, no doubt!

"Next, I saw you drop your handkerchief,
And stooping half over to pick it up
You gave him a look past all belief,
Fairly leered at the pup!

"You would rather keep one eye on him
Than two hands on me; so your world runs away
At a dash on an idle whim,
A woman's one way.

"Is there the soul or half a gleam
From head to heart of him, sifted through,
To prop one thought of an idle dream
Of his loving you?

"Is there not proof you watched for hours,
 Wrapped in a side window's green curtain fold,
 To see him stop to cradle you flowers
 By a blade made of gold?

"Is there not proof your heart struck fast
 And sharp at the ribs of its prison cell
 To escape to seize him at last,
 Catch the lie he should tell?

"A tomtit perched in a blade of grass
 And you make of him more than the great could claim;
 More than the soul of my singing has
 Is the chirp of his name.

"Shall a man pass for more than he is
 Because nature rounded him up in the cheek,
 Tipped his lips hot to red as a kiss,
 But forbade him to speak?

"I am convenient—to lean upon;
 Could set out a tree in the world, no doubt,
 Somewhat to think of when I am gone
 And the world finds me out.

"The animal in him holds you fast,
 Like an anaconda unspirits a wren
 Till all his singing hour be past
 And snows dance again.

"Fine bones new-made and his face is true,
 But sense and the heart of it, what of them?
 Think you the sun pencils red to blue
 Without piercing a gem?

"And you, are you once wiser than he,
That could link your luck to him, think him wise,
See in him more than the saints could be,
Nor a point to despise?"

"Make most of him, so, now you can;
Time pinches, you shall be mine ere long;
Power sticks to the man who is always a man;
Things fly to the strong."

Next day he found her between two wings
Of a forest edge in a summer light
To bewail such power of earthly things
To twist wrong out of right;

Sighing only—here was her thought,
That Truth might claim him truly as she
Who made him her love and her lot;
He was hers—only he.

She was all for him—love made it so;
No thought nor look meant for other men;
"One day, not far off, he shall know,
When my heart sings again."

Love lives alert, like any valued thing;
A nest to loot and ravish—always 't was so,
All as this pompon rose will drive a sting,
Frost prick through the snow.

That way a man shall be whipped into form,
Like a seashell pitches each pretty key
From ocean's thunder-strokes of pelt and storm
To hand me melody!

AT THE ALTAR

I

THE church was rich. So, too, was the priest;
Moonstones in his knuckles,
Half a dozen there at least;
One silver bunch of buckles
At his wrist
Which he kissed,
For they fastened souls, and so
There was Beauty in each claw-jaw and tentacle and toe.

II

The place was bright. So, too, was the priest;
Cunning in his teaching,
And of reason, what a feast!
Such power was in his preaching
There was dread
When he said:
Give what you have, or cherish
Small hope of putting wing above the tumble-bugs that perish.

III

The people, they were poor as a straw,
Stuck to life by hoping
They could one day fill his craw
By steadfast fast and moping,

Keeping poor
To be sure
Of their chance of Heaven the way
He told them of—no hope for him who would not fast and pay.

IV

At the altar, which was malachite,
Jasper-jawed, gold-beaded
To lend just that pomp and might
His stupid doctrine needed,
He would kneel
To appeal
For more power, more gold, and so
He kept the peoples' pockets poor who kneeled and feared
him so.

V

One day came little Ida, each cheek
Poor and white for wasting,
Scarce a lip to her to speak,
Scarce more she got than tasting,
Crossed her hands
Like two bands
Of pale silk at the back of her,
So the father might not look to see how white and thin they
were,

VI

As at the altar she took her stand,
Now the crowd was pressing,
Dropped a guinea in his hand,
Then knelt to get his blessing—

You could see
Surely she
Had given all—not a sou
Was left to her that night to pull the little body through.

VII

Poor child—but God knows his way, be sure,
Knows your knuckles glisten,
Knows each way you rob the poor,
Then pray, smirk, thumb and listen.
Have a care,
Father Snare,
You 'll hand it back by inches
In a land where justice waits to pinch it out of you by pinches!

VIII

Your church—there it flies towards Heaven,
Makes one rainhow orbit
Not higher than the clouds even,
And you think so much of it
With its girth
Back to earth,
Like an arrow rises to dip,
To spread the wings of an angel—there 's poison there at the
tip!

IX

At the altar next I saw them lay
Little Ida Lowly,
Hands crossed till Judgment Day,
The great gong said it slowly—

Gentle bells,
Sorrow bells,
For right where the rain was mobbing
They laid her down by nightfall—there the heart of Heaven
was sobbing.

SWORD AND PEN

Put up the sword,
Pick up the pen,
Trickle one word
To the world again;
Whether the ink be fire, blood or dew,
Dip it in, you and you!

Take up the pen,
Take off the sword,
Write it again
To a last red word;
Again and again, prick with the pen
Till it stick into men.

Thou shalt not kill!
There is your word!
Thou shalt not spill
One drop of his blood,
That brother of yours with love of light,
With life for his right.

Settle it now
Blood has been spilt;
Let your new vow
Blaze up to the hilt:
Peace in the world, good will to men!
Stick it in with the pen!

What is there great,
What fine or brave
To topple your mate
To an early grave,
Running the boundary line of states
By the blood of your mates?

What shall ye say
Who snatch an hour
To spar for play
With the thrones of power?
What shall ye answer the great All Good
That have scattered his brood?

One whole life
For you or me
Caught on a knife
In a blood-red sea
Where youth was slain—and your world plods on
With the best of it gone!

Men noble born
Struck from the roll,
Men that had worn
A God in their soul—
Too bad their young true hearts were spilled,
That they had to be killed!

Stretch one strong hand
Out to the pole,
Gather in land,
Dominion the whole—
More is a breath of brotherhood worth
Than your blood-spattered earth.

Gather men in
To think and do
As you, without sin,
To learn what is true
By thinking your way—kill half of them off
For labor of love!

They that remain
Must take your way,
Speak, in the main,
Walk as you say;
And the land—let not your good other hand
Overlook the sweet land!

Kill half of them off,
Ye of the blest,
Slaughter enough
To rescue the rest
From serving the Devil by being free
To unyoke and to see.

The savage way,
A fierce first plan
Which tore its fray
In the heart of Man;
Will never some kindliness take its place
To gentle a race?

Kill for Right,
Then count the Wrong!
Right without Might
Makes the sweet new song;
Kill for your kings—love will be born
When their kingdoms are gone.

Sword and Pen

Death to what 's true,
Graves for your love,
And what will ye do
In the end thereof?
Better true and kind than wise or great
In your wooing of Fate.

Strike with the pen
Till tears be shed;
Plunge it again
Till your wrongs be dead;
The dagger that kills without a wound—
Stick it in, turn it 'round!

DE AMICITIA

So you want her,
So she wants you,
While I 'm too old to be loved, you think,
So only one thing remains to do,
I must give her up, break the link
By which I hang to hope,
Put her out of my thought and scope,
Turn me to other aims and ends
Just because I and you are friends!

I am too old to be loved, you say—
Yet am I never too old to love,
So out of God's wonderful Enough
There must be a heart and day
For me—love will have its way
Of going where it is wanted;
Love by love is held and haunted
In spite of your cheek of cream
And damask, or your young puppy-dream.

Yet are you all my friend,
While here am I with my love of you
To make the best of me in the end,
Do what is noblest in me to do
For love of it and for love of you,
'Though it split the heart I have in two

De Amicitia

I keep for her—there 's your test
Of love: do your God-royal best,
Kind Cosmos do the rest.

So yester eve I did this thing:
I took me to our lady's bower
Where she toyed like a sapphire flower
With sweet in the end of spring;
I begged her to think of you,
I begged her to let me pass
For a strip of withered grass,
I old, while there were you
In boy-buttons, moulded new,

Nor a thought that could sculpture losses
Cheek-deep, put crosses
Over each eye as if for sign
To lure you to look higher
Than this world's gizzard-desire,
 Seize upon power divine,
So I pleaded with her for you
 How you were spirit-true,
 Strong and new.

So I sang of you while she listened,
While as I begged her to know
You were perfect while I was not so,
There her cheek mantled, eye glistened
So I could see her soul dart forth
Like a new star out of the north
As on I went gaining ground,
Telling her no man could be found
Manly like you in the world around,

As snug in her bower she stood
Like a lapwing nests in a bunch of flowers
For courage to her startled mood
And I grew, telling of your powers,
Warmer, keener, oh how I sang
Praises of you till the sweet air rang
At her ears for bell and bell
Till the pink helix stood there to tell
Her whole soul, like an ocean shell,

Her true warm eyes straight at me,
Each flutter as if she would fly my way,
Her Beauty all a man could see,
Her Spring-look one whole year of May
As on I went to tell her true
How you were for her just, she just for you,
What light path and bright weather
Life makes for those who love together,
How she must not lose one look of you,

For love is not in the world too much,
 Love like yours—I told her how
Fortune favors young love's vow
Of heart to heart and two souls in touch,
And—now as I talked I saw,
As I thought, how her heart was longing for

 You just, when straight she came
To where I stood, spoke my name,
Her two lips like a breath of flame,

 Put her wide eyes to me
So soul-true, whole heartfully,
This one thought flashed past: I knew
She was not thinking once of you,

But of me—there she stood
Like the violet waiting to be wooed—
Now was there no mistaking
The old sign and new waking—
She was mine there for the taking!

What was for me to do?
I had done my best for you
Clean to the bitter end—
So true to you was I for friend
I knew not another thought save you—
So that way 't was I won her,
And not a speckle on my honor—
Yet you have this always, my friend,
I did my best for you to the end.

KINGS AND QUEENS

YOUR fashion-way was one way
To take him to task
In under your mask—
I remember that Sunday
You gave pout to him to have him feel
He must, to capture you, come to kneel
For love to your stubborn heel.

Your one way of rulishness,
Since you had it so in you
To be master—your few
Stop to stoop to ghoulishness
Of the claw kind, their whole way of love
Is lording it just to perch above—
The vulture and not the dove.

Have a look at it for square
And the price you pay
On a quarter-day
For what but to pin him there
As a puffin will fork a snow-gnat through,
That you may have him to monarch to
To bring him to love of you.

Is the thing between you this,
To see who shall rule
To a gulletful
Nor mind what you gain or miss?

Look at it once in a sense-head way,
This kingliness, will it one half pay
For the love you lost that day?

You took him to be your man,
And a man is not
By the common lot
Less than God made him, a man
To govern you in his soulful way,
Since there is the man in him each day
For mastership in his way.

But you had your one way, too,
To master by might
Of another right,
A way which was meant for you,
One way of love and of yielding-to,
Which would bring him to his whole love of you
To keep, if you only knew.

He for master by his plan
Of the outward show
Just to have it so,
You for mistress to lead your man
By spirit forces so deeplier set
That he should follow and not forget,
Since love is his master yet.

Suppose you to pen him close
Like a game-cock you clap
In a slatted trap
To bring his beak to his toes,
The foot and fang of him you will thwart,
But what about that fine other part
You tried for, his soul and heart?

Will you pen them too, perchance,
To take to your will
Like a daffodil
You twitch from a nest of plants?
Will you bend soul for a satin spray
To bow to you of an April day,
Or win it by love's one way?

If you could would you have it so
To crush the wild flower
Of love in an hour
For rulership so you could know
You held your man by a ring in his nose,
An eye of glass to not see how he knows
A thorn from its velvet rose?

You had him to love you once,
Yet you played your part
By a withered heart,
The head of a dimpled dunce
To lose him by just your thimble swing
Of will at him, you to pinch and sting
Like a frost-bite late in Spring.

Not yield?—is it weak to yield
Since you drew him on
Like a poupeton
Where his love cried out and kneeled
To do your least will, to catch one nod
Of a wish he could grant you above sod?—
To love is to rule with God.

Did you not yield that day
I could see you creep
Up your hillside steep
For love of a month of May

To where one yellow-bell had begun
To duck to you through a mottled sun
Just as your day was done

That you might stoop to it to kneel
To give it a twist
At the slender wrist,
Tuck it in your breast-band, feel
How the flower had conquered you—you knew
What gentleness it turned to you,
How it nodded and yielded too

To snug in your inmost breast
To be borne about
For safe above pout,
Toe-trample, smite and the rest;
There 's love to win when the claw is down;
Head under if you would wear a crown;
Love will be off at your frown!

PHILOSOPHER AND PRIEST

COME, go with me, friend and would-be saint!
Stop thumbing prayers, but come with me;
 Let go your flaps,
 Drop creeds and scraps,
Try once to fancy how you are free
While we whistle an hour and a half
 At the wind and its chaff.

Down to the sea's old rub and swink—
Stop bending thought, heaven is wide;
 Stand straight as a God
 By the gaping sod!
To the beach, let us follow the tide
And crooning wail of the sea
 As you listen to me!

How you shuffle to slink by the way
Two to three lengths of a thought behind!
 What is to fear?
 God made you a peer;
Step front, full of breast and mind!
Whip into line straight as a thread,
 Step wholly ahead!

Scoop a handful of sand at your feet!
The sea has clinched with a dog-tooth shore
 Till mountains are dust
 At whims of a gust,
Or drool to cobble an ocean's floor;

Philosopher and Priest

While just there in the palm of your hand
Is a grape-growing land.

Eery wave churns flint into wine!
Quit pinching sand, there 's nothing there!
Look up and about,
Truth 's caught by a doubt!
Let 's be looking for love and a care;
Not half of an atom of space
Is dropped out of the race.

Were you thinking truth stood still,
That tenets of dogma, creed,
Make first or last
Of all that is cast
In souls of an infinite need?
Sooner think, for sooner the sand
Will snatch truth from your hand.

From rock to wine, from wine to blood,
From burning blood to burning soul,
And the thought comes quick
'T is an infinite trick,
These heavens but an edge of the scroll,
Your sight but the gaze of the dead
At worlds overhead.

One touch of knowledge no heart could bear;
Ye cannot know, ye would not know,
Save soul is there
In the outer air
Where seasons neither come nor go,
Nor any sky nor thing I see
Greater than the soul in thee.

By stooping low, by mouthing mocks
Will ye breathe as the wings of a dove?

The lounge of a sphinx,

Lunge of a lynx

Strike nearer home in the heart of love;

Strip an air from the soul of your wren

As he rises again!

Mark you yonder pretty-hearted child

Prattling, spattling at coddled sand!

Of such, am I told,

Of such is the fold

In a kingdom of some kinglier land;

She will not lift an eye nor lower a knee,

But breathes divinity.

Stay here to watch her a while!

One small white grave she digs in the sand—

But she may not know

What the grave is, so

She keeps on digging, song in hand;

One more thrust of the surf will lave

Her white heart in its grave.

Will you call her back, tell her good

Or evil; show her sham or shame;

Or a world impart

To such sweet young heart

To see it wilt between frost and flame?

Or leave her there to an ocean's sod

And the welcome of God?

How close behind her that last sea struck!

She never hears one savage blow;

Philosopher and Priest

Will you leave her there
To the endless care
Of waves weighed down by breast of snow,
Or snatch her away to let her learn
Souls both freeze and burn?

To clapping of hands in the sand
Do you think she would ever return,
Or once retrace
Step or grace
Of childhood's kingdom of unconcern?
Or wander once back within reach
Of shouts of the beach?

One short step now and Heaven is hers;
Will you hold her here where tenets die?
Would it seem to you
There could be two
Diverging paths to a single sky?
Her perfect heart—while what will you do
Now choice is with you?

Afraid there might be a mistake?
What you think right may be wrong?
Is wrong, then, flower
Of infinite power,
Short words to an endless song?
Tear the soul from a note of your wren
As he carols again!

Is such question too long for thought?
Will reason not fathom it out?
Yet you shall decide
Ere a sweep of the tide
Take her off where there's neither faith nor doubt.

Slow truth speak quick ere the small pink hand
 Reach for God in the sand!

Tap your Nicene knowledge again,
 Faith of the fathers, lore on lore,
 Yet ye shall not know
 If to stay or go
 Be not all the same on the farther shore.
 Little I see, whatnot or whatso,
 While nothing I know.

Fine faith, too, will give you the slip,
 Since faith soars higher than level thought;
 Is there no way out
 Of your cloud of doubt,
 Nor sharper trap by which truth is caught?
 Look again once how her small blind hands
 Make love to the sands!

Not by knowing; not, too, by faith;
 Drop an ear to strokes of the heart
 Ringing out chime
 Through fire and rime
 And not heard above knowledge, gold and art;
 Think once of the waste and blame of it!
 Oh, think of the shame of it!

Get truth, then, straight as it is:
 A child's new laugh rings out on the beach,
 While not at the nod
 Of command from a God
 Would you let it die out of your reach;
 Thumb creed, thunder God as you will,
 Love is sovereign still!

Look how the tide now turns away
To leave her there to clasping sun!
 Is it wonder, then,
 The hearts of men
Should find their labor of love well done?
Take her up, clasp her close, for right there
 Is your "love and a care."

All stars are double; world to world
The clinging atoms know their places;
 Not the smallest grain
 Of such vast domain
But seeks a mate out of conscious spaces;
How her soul's eyes look you through and through,
 And the image of you!

She will draw you back to your heart again,
Lead you out into spirit-land;
 Hold her fast for dear
 Since an end is near,
You 'll go together, hand in hand!
In earth below, in worlds above,
 What is life without love?

KNOW THY MATE

THREE men sat at their after-dinner:

 "I am your professional sinner,"
Said one, "and no new-born beginner!"

 Look twice, just to take notice of that
For clean confession worth looking at!

"You may put me down for another,
 Your Sir Rank professional brother
To the toe-end, to puff or smother,"

 Said the second, as he spit one stripe
Of blue smut from his orange pipe.

"I 'm worth counting, by Heaven above,
 So count me out of your demon love!
This world's red-handed rough enough

 For my taste," spoke the third, now he took
His side-seat and flabbergasted look.

Dined they together—and they had dined!

 Priest never better dined and wined
Or felt his hide so supremely lined

 Of mud-shad in red radish sauce,
Enough to stuff a dozen craws!

NUMBER ONE

Your life, and what is it after all

 But tapers down to the small end small,
One certain spread of one curtain-pall?

Know Thy Mate

Or what will you more in your term
Than fetch a twist of the trodden worm?

NUMBER TWO

So I say too—truth in that thinking!
Little use of honest swinking!
Comes not life of eating and drinking?
So shall it end when that ends too,
Sure as belly 's the best of you!

NUMBER ONE

To the drinks, then, that never we boast
Of virtue, of our surviving ghost!
King be the man who shall clutch the most!
High wine for a warming to start
The bloodhound in this red-hot heart!

NUMBER TWO

Here 's to the woman one man holds true!
She 's mine, if I can get her, too,
To show how great I can be and do,
And odds to you there in the corner—
You shall play lap-dog and first mourner!

NUMBER ONE

Good enough that for a lord to say!
Am I not moulded to have my day
And there 's the dog in me to pay?
Whichever way you probe to know,
Put peg in here: God made it so!

NUMBER TWO

Right again, pal, so now for a pull!
Drown my glass to the nozzle full

For health to our corner puff-ball fool
Of high mind—a health to him now,
Him of the ethical temple-brow!

NUMBER THREE

But slowly to what you are training for!
“Give and take” governs for common law,
So coward he who shall yelp or yaw!
He who gives, he too shall take,
Just for pleasant manner's sake!

NUMBER TWO

That time for once and you hit it right!
No cowards we, afraid of light,
But we give and take, we friend or fight,
And not a nerve of us to flinch
Once we feel our own brogans pinch!

NUMBER ONE

Drink to her picture, for here it is!
The woman I was not born to miss,
Who gives me her best bottled-up kiss!
Her picture! Mark the starbeam there
Tucked in her forest of citron hair!

One look from me and she came my way
As my pet bird will, to show how gay
She could perch and coo when once astray
To flutter in my columbine—
I touched her wing and she was mine!

NUMBER TWO

Scoundrel! The picture there 's my wife!
Now, by Heaven, we come to the knife,

Know Thy Mate

And you pay back by your vulture-life!
To arms, and we fight it out here,
As hell is black and this life is dear!

NUMBER THREE

Not so fast! You are not beginners,
But hide-bound old professional sinners,
The catch-all tribe of women-winners,
So why such ado about this,
Only one blundrous slip amiss?

NUMBER FOUR

(Wife)

Well said, as next to your booth I heard
How your honor was piqued and stirred,
So many fangs to one small word,
And only a wife to tell
How you lighted her way to hell!

My lover was never you,
But he is there in the next booth too,
His broken heart in his drunken stew!
As for your soul, do not unearth it,
For truth is this truth—I am not worth it!

BLOODHOUNDS OF THE CZAR

THIS was the Czar of Russia,
His country to rule or crush her—
What say you, or what say I
Now a king
Knows the right and wrong of a thing,
If a man shall live, if a man shall die?—
Is there not Rome or Prussia
To example a way
Of Power-play?—
Enough for the Czar of Russia!

People are dogs one way,
So he thought;
They love to be schooled,
To be rod-ruled
So their hides and heels may be taught
As well as their souls to obey
One king alone,
One whip-cord throne—
Now for how he did it
By quirk and quiddit!

You know a people could never be
Greater than their king, His Majesty,
Could not be freer than he was,
Be more liberal to a cause,
'T would never do,
Or he must chop their loftiness in two—

Bloodhounds of the Czar

Did they not take him for king
 To give them laws?
Could they once ever take to wing
 For nobler cause,
 For wider swing?

Mark how a king is slave
Just so much as his people is,
 Like I am handcuffed to a knave
To hold him so I may not miss
 My prisoner—there am I
Prisoner too, and sigh for sigh
 To go his way, take his twitch,
Join him in each jump and hitch—
 With him I learn to flinch,
Without him I may not budge an inch!

Finland was one happy pappy land,
 The people were alive
 As hornets in a hive
 To understand
What a thing it is to be
 Unkingdomed, wholly free
To do the thing a man is born to do
 And not a check from church or state or you,
 To sing and soar and think
 And no master, not a wink.

It came to pass one early summer day,
 Now school was out, children were at play,
Came pretty Princess Belle Anne to her task
 To teach—she had torn away the mask
To do and be her noblemost she was,
 So came to teach the children to be free,

To strike against a monarchy of laws,
 To shout the highest human cause
 Men think of or ever was,
 One noble Independency.

She taught them to be men outright,
 To make their way
 To think each thought out day and day,
 How the only king in the world is Right—
 Taught them not to pray, but to do
 The thing a man should be manful at
 For fear of neither God nor you
 And to keep their whole heart fast to that—
 Quick to love, quick to hate
 Power which strikes to dominate.

One day the sun was streaming,
 New clouds were teeming
 With new eyes, lips, cheeks,
 One look by which the whole heaven speaks—
 School was out,
 One heard the blue round air
 Ring for happy-hearted shout,
 Wishfulness was everywhere
 In tree-bird, bee-bower,
 Copple-crown flower.

Our Princess now took her way
 To one fountain in the woods
 To watch the sun-bubbles play
 Like puckles in silver hoods
 As there she stood to think,
 By the fountain-brink,
 How each tiny water-drop is free
 To break the chain which binds it to the sea,

Bloodhounds of the Czar

To leap sky-ways, spread each wing
Which takes its own shape and coloring

Of iris or plain white,
Such elegance and such free leap,
Who knows but a thousand eyes for sight
And soul to puncture the deep,
Poise in mid-most air, like soul,
Then drop to float about the whole
Slave race of waters, large and by,
Then the one little peaceful sigh
Where it breaks in two, joins the sky

Sudden, as there she thought
If life counts great, counts not,
Watched one oquassa leap
To pluck a bubble in its sleep,
There by just an edge of the wood
One superbest man-shape stood—
What for the straight strong eye
To look one way nor question why,
One topmost sky-round brow
To plan kingdomy and know how

To make his mark as good as his vow,
You never saw another
Such masterful mastiff-brother—
And, very truth, such was his forte,
The King's prime favorite at court,
His bloodhound, for such he was
To Machiavellize new cause
For iron-hearted laws,
Force-foremost, anything
To make him master and real king.

All in him went to convince—
His stalwartage, each action,
That composed self-satisfaction
We see in the Bloodhound-Prince—
What for now
And he dropped her his princely bow,
Begun to speak,
The powerful against the weak,
And she
Heart-bound by his supremacy

Of kind courage, trappy care
Which took her captive there!
By an edge of the fountain
With its water-mountain
Stood he handsome-straight,
A pillar of state,
Nor knew her, who she might be,
Save for the stamp of royalty
Put plainly there
In her sweet stateliness and Princess-air.

Nor knew she who he was,
Magistrate or master of laws,
But just such ideal kind
Of man she took to mind
In her young day when youth dreams
And life is only what it seems.
The two of them were drawn together
Under the branches which seemed high
As heaven, like mating of earth and sky,
Nor asked they why or whether.

Oh, it was love,
Nought less, nothing above—

Bloodhounds of the Czar

Was not that enough
That they were so plainly made
Each for the other as tree and glade?
It was love and he said it,
And she was there to dread it
And love too, as well he knew
How to break her will in two,
To hold her raptured and fastened too.

Right at the nook of a cranny-neb
Stood she watching one spider-web
The fountain sprayed with dew
Till a thousand eyes of greenish blue
Raptured and fastened her too—
Straight she looked, yet never saw
Snare in it or cunning paw
Or what such eyes were looking for,
Never once thought of it nor spied
The trick of the spider snug inside!

So too into his eyes she looked
Where the destinies of men were booked,
Far-reaching eyes, as if they were given
To pick the lock of Heaven—
Into his eyes—love was there
For good and fair—
The great man strong and weak,
She all power over him to see
How spirit flew to his lips, and he
No power to speak.

“Ha! I ’m the Princess Belle Anne you see!
Many a man would capture me,
For I hate the Czar, I teach the young
To stay their hand, to loose their tongue

For freedom—always I said
 'Never a drop of blood be shed'—
 Always I said Law intended
 Love and Justice should be blended—
 Yet look you out wide and far
 You 'll not find one so hates the Czar."

"God, is it so?"—the strong man weak
 Now found forty lips to speak:
 "Save thyself!—this day I gave
 Command that whoso taught
 Ruction or blasphemous treason-thought
 Finds pitfall in a grave!
 Look to yourself—the sweet air
 Spits poison, subtle death
 Lurks in each lilac-breath
 For none to spare!"

"Not so," she answered, now she saw
 The man in him of power and law
 To prop a kingdom, hang his star
 Higher and brighter than the Czar—
 "Not so, but look you to you
 To save yourself—your liberty
 Is forfeit if harm come to me—
 Look you, too, how I can save
 Finland and you
 From one dungeon-grave!

"Finland, my happy land, people brave,
 And there you made it into a grave
 Of loud heart and freedom
 To build your throne by force-decreedom!

Yet is the fault not yours—you were trained
 To mastership by small ways,
To keep in mind your king always,
 Your people to beguile
By sops, by pearls of smile,
 You underhearted, overbrained.

 “Yet will I save
Finland and you from one dungeon-grave”—
 Right as she spoke
Gendarmes through the forest broke
 To take her—there before his eyes,
My lord-minister, she was seized,
 To his furious surprise,
King's prisoner now in spite
 Of my lord's ministerial might,
Whether he was pained or pleased.

Next day in the market-place
 The people came—
One would think a whole human race
 Was there to claim
Right of sovereignty, for so it was,
 They were there for one human cause,
 A free thought, free part,
 Free play for head and heart—
Their Goddess was Princess Belle Anne, who said:
 “Never a drop of blood be shed!”—

 And she in prison—so
They voted to seize their man
 Of power behind the throne—
Nor sooner said than done, for lo,
 Our minister meantime was grown
Impatient to see and know

What meant such thousands in one place,
So marched to the front to show his face
When, lo, they seized him—he too was sent
Into the like imprisonment.

Loved and lover in one jaw,
One for making, one for breaking law—
Yet stranger yet to tell,
Side by side, cell to cell
They were put prisoners by chance
And none knew such curious circumstance
Save themselves—they knew,
So kept the secret between them two
To talk the night out—each saw
How the other loved above kings and law—

How love is an only mistress to rule,
Royallest government, highest school—
There he said:

“Never I knew how the people are
Genuine bloodhounds of the Czar,
How, too, so easily they are led
If you hold them in check
By smile and beck
Of your single sentence so kindly said:
Never a drop of blood be shed!”

“To-morrow,” she answered, “you shall see
How my people love and do for me—
They shall love and do for you too
If you bear them love, treat them true—
For now at a word from me
Mark you they will set me free—
At another word they will turn to,
Burst your bars, free you too

Bloodhounds of the Czar

On my word for it you are to be
Their first friend eternally.

“Trained are you in your school of head—
Friend, this world has another part,
One truth all too lightly said:
Everything most is thought,
Everything is taught and wrought
Save only this human heart,
Yet is there no power in sight
Which has its compass-range for might
Of conquest to rule so fully,
To hold men so trued and truly.”

Now the voices of the two are still—
How heart reaches to heart and calls
Through iron-fisted walls!—
Outside sang the whippoorwill,
Sun poked in through the bars,
Love was there at the morning hour,
Not once imprisoned, scorning power
And the threat of a thousand Czars—
My lord-minister knew he saw
Love makes first and final law,

For just that morning the people came,
Broke her chain, set her free,
So now she spoke like a breath of flame:
“The man, your prisoner, is my man there,
He is life and heart and soul of me—
Break you his bonds nor spare
A breath of you till you set him free—
On this you may depend,
He is to be your foremost friend
On to the onward end!”

An instant more and there he stood
 In the midst of one trusting multitude,
 Her arms 'round him—you know how
 A woman seals her mighty vow
 Of her mighty heart,
 Her host of Heaven, eyes so wide and true,
 As if the soul of her would depart
 To come and dwell in you—
 There my strong man stern
 Bent him to give her his love in turn

Till the people, to girl and boy,
 Broke wild in their leap of joy
 That they should now have a friend at court
 Just by the gentle Belle Anne's forte
 Of love—wrong was to righten,
 Greatness to grow, burden to lighten—
 What for a king is love
 To rule so we 're never ruled enough,
 For see how Finland has prospered since
 And never the chop-lick of a Prince!

DEATH

I

How beautiful a thing is death
 With its other breath,
Soul's opportunity for being
 Beyond light, beyond seeing,
To have without showing,
 To go without knowing
Which way or whereto,
 To summon the whole heart of you
To greatness, put to test
 Your ground-grit and very best!
Like a storm to overwhelm,
 How it puts you to the helm!
As in life, so in death
 Leastly counts the flying breath,
Mostly counts the man,
 What he is, what he can—
By the power he overthrows,
 By that much he gains and grows—
So take this look at death,
 Anyone who reasoneth,
To see in it a power
 Tries to match a man each hour—
Something to overcome
 Gives him speech, strikes him dumb,

Rounds him up to hit or miss,
 Lets him find out what he is
So that he may not flee it,
 But keep his clinch to be it!
Each man so shall have his chance
 To outweather circumstance
Just by force of what he is,
 Since nothing was made to miss
For one who shall keep his way
 Of masterhood, make his day
Of value, do what he can
 As heartful and mostful man
By way of Beautiful Right
 For love of it, keep no Heaven in sight,
He his own integral might
 Of self-sublimest man
On some supersolar plan,
 Beyond penalties, beyond rewards,
To conquer untoward odds,
 He a whole God among the Gods.

What is there a man may bring
 His life to to make him king
But counter-blows to draw
 His sparks, plant his meteor
Above what he sees around
 In grub-work or lap-dog ground?
Death comes—did you chance to think
 Nothing is over the brink?
But look how death is enough
 To force you to look above
Griff-life, stomach-dower,
 Each little wanton hour!
There 's the supremest power

And providence of death
To show how nothing is in a breath,
How everything is in soul
Bent on being the rounded whole!

II

She laid her down to die
Of an evening-morning,
Before Aurora could warn the sky
Of any dawning;
Beautiful my garden-flower-girl was;
Harken to what she said,
Stop a moment just because
Such another moment and she was dead.

Dew-light was on the grass
Of her pasture-lawn,
Where yesterday just I saw her pass
And turn to look upon
Each fly-leaf and dandelion breast,
Then on her mill-bank brook,
Her flock of wrens and all the rest,
As if she knew it was her last look.

About her house and mill
Quiet was, night-sweet too;
The moon leaned in at her windowsill,
It was dying too
As there she turned her sweet face aside,
One look more, her best and last,
And so she blossomed and died
Like the flower she was, and her life was past.

We saw her eyes were set,
Saw, too, the moonbeams came

To nest in them as if to beget
 Sight like a leap of flame
 To look beyond what the others see
 To what is true and fair,
 More than mere humanity,
 More than the life of worlds out there.

Such was her simple life
 She never knew a way
 But honest thought, wholesomest strife
 Her day after day
 To do her best her whole heart could
 Nor ever complain,
 Lived for just her love of good,
 Nor came once a thought of the after-gain.

Just a little flower-girl
 As you oftenest see;
 'Round her temples danced lock and curl
 In jubilee,
 As straight to her cheek her heart would rush
 Like jumping to tell
 How sky too, by one morning blush,
 Proves you all heaven is all heart as well.

Her life she gave to do
 What most she could her way
 To make the noblest of what she knew
 Each day upon day,
 Her little cares to make mightiest thought,
 Her task to be done
 If it profited her or not,
 And what is there soulfuller under the sun?

Each day I saw her take
 Armfuls of flowers to town
For love of them, not for the pittance' sake
 Of her half crown
To keep life up, for there was her love
 Of Beauty, like a bee
Will hover about and above
 His flower for only the blush to see.

Not for hunger and thirst
 Was a part of an hour
But they came last, Beauty stood first
 For perfectest power,
Nor storm could whistle to pipe a threat
 Should put her aside,
Never whimper nor regret,
 As so she turned to her moon and died;

Died the way of the great,
 Proof-pointed against Power
To put the soul out of reach or date,
 Her poise of a flower
To kiss the storm just to pocket sweet
 Nor be blown aside,
Never knew a moment's defeat
 As there she turned to her moon and died.

NOT SO QUICK!

I

SLOWLY, my son—'t is a trick of truth
Half times to play one pretty trick with youth
 As it flutters by,
Half to find what love is all about,
More to watch a peach-lipped maiden pout
Now she knows you heard her sigh.

I saw you, you sly one, last night late
Stuffed in between a girl's cape and the gate
 To bolt out the moon,
As if you feared, in your next embrace,
Sky would peek in to find her face
Like an evening's cheek in June.

Leaning out over my window-ledge
I saw you lift just a hand to pledge
 Her your finest word,
When I tapped the sill—my moon was there
To stalk about with a careless air—
You stopped where you thought you heard
What might have been spirit-raps laid light
To warn you to keep an eye on night
 At her clever tricks
To cover faults by a piece of veil,
Or turn dark soul-spots into pale
As moon in her silver flix.

Not So Quick

For by what she said—I know her way—
You thought you could trust to her dimple-play,
 To her feather's breath;
By what she said! What a foolish thing!
Trust a lark to creep, a snail to sing!
Trust the lockjaw jibe of death!

For down my lane just the night before,
Where a bush invites with an open door,
 Where grasses watch,
I passed, while all by one ticklish hap
I heard her whine at her lover's lap
Close in by the Knuckle Notch.

My moon was about, my true new moon
Which keeps one place, like a lazy tune,
 So I could see plain
Her cheek made snug to another's cheek,
Could catch her sigh, could hear her speak
Her love again and again.

And then, "He 's young, this Osmond" she said,
"A trifle soft-clinkered about the head
 As well as heart;
But gold he has to an overplus,
The thing we need and enough for us;
Trust me to perform my part.

"He 'll wed me—I have him all and fast;
He 'll knuckle to duck to my will from last
 Up to first, you 'll see;
I 'll wed him because you wish it so,
One more hard way just to make you know
He counts only gold to me.

"So shall you rule him and not be seen;
But a word from you behind your screen
 And he shall obey;
His gold for you and his soul for you;
To teach you how I can love and be true,
You shall dance while he shall pay.

"He shall throw back nor if nor but,
My green moth at his honey-gut
 And lost in the game!
You shall put candle to his nose,
Your spider's fleece about his toes,
Strip his wings in the flame."

II

Listen to my story of the bull!
White May was at hand, the fens were full
 Of young cedar-scent;
Swamp-apples tossed to and fro
To try to jingle, like bells of snow;
The promise of June was well meant.

At Woodstock it was—I launched out there
For my zig-zag trip in one morning air
 Of a valley's jaws;
Soul could be seen where clouds were bled,
God could be heard now the lip was red
With pledges of songs in haws.

Steep stood the slant as slant could be
Now I mounted on the sunny side
 Of a ledge's face
Which put gray eyes where my sky was set
Like a blue cap drawn on the mountain jet,
But much too large for the place,

Not So Quick

When sudden, now as I looked aloft,
One black bull stepped to the upper toft
 For his drink of wind—
Two troubled horns dropped over his head—
A hearse with two white plumes for the dead,
Thought I—there he snarled and grinned!

All nostril out to the rim was spread
To an inside dark with the entrance red,
 Like a sun-spot's pit;
Wild eyes to fathom I was there,
Yet shot out sideways for maddened glare
Like lights at a beacon's spit,

As if he rather would not half see
What slaughter he meant to make of me
 For passing whim,
While I squared back, one jaw put firm,
Which left my inside soul to squirm
As I held to my ground for him.

As rifted cloud before bursting suns
His nostrils broke fire, two belching guns
 From a turret's nose;
Plunging his horns hard into the ground,
One kick at the wind, one sidelong bound,
His big bulk fell and rose,

Then lunged at me down the hill-steep straight
Like an avalanche, full of hell and hate
 And an arrow's flight,
Doubled his speed each leap he flew
Like star-shot pierces the overblue,
Keeping me hard in sight,

Rushed at me, bristled his pall of hide,
Yet could not stop now I stepped aside

To let him go by;

No stay for him on such hanging steep,
Force was fierce as the pit was deep
And dug for such as would die.

On down he flew at pace so fleet
Body shot faster than all the feet,

So took to the air

By round leaps, rings of somersaults;
Each manœuvre, save only the halts,
Of the hurricane was there!

Stump-tops, boulders fell in ahead,
As if they, too, now raised from the dead,

Would join such sport;

So I lost him—I could bear my loss—
Yet shuddered to watch him flop and toss
His dumbhead hide into port.

Down I stalked to know of him,
In a gorge's gulch by the river-brim,

Where his wreck was wrought,

When, lo, his epitaph, just a scratch
Of blood and hair on a granite patch,
And one more lesson was taught!

AFTER DEATH

Prelude

To die is divine!
How the iron hills nor die nor pine
Nor wrinkle nor lose a tear,
Yet for deep eons they are here!
To die is divine, ever provided
My living always was all-sided
To right, love, power
Of man-majesty, vast good,
Which come to master the puma-mood
And rat-bite and cross-breed
Which mingle spirit, by whatever stretch,
With sliminess and the dragon-wretch
Of murderous purpose, gut-greed
To get, by whatever means, through clay
One new shoot of blossom-ray
To sparkle in a perfecter day,
Just as yonder water-lip star
Picks white light up to turn it blue
Or Epsom, as the planets are,
Or steel or umber-roan for you—
You the clay-gem to let spirit
Plunge through the grit, burn and spear it
To take on color, force fashion
To outmaster and outshine passion,
Pot-purpose, weather-cock breath,
To loom in some zenith after death.

I

What could be plainer than this,
 That all of the weather-white sky
 Is light, nor darkness is
 Any part of eternity?
 Oceans of fire, showers of suns
 Where Phard kindles, Bungula runs!

II

Light comes my way,
 Yet from where it comes
 When night swamps and the woodcock drums
 Who shall say?
 Only I know this thing,
 The wizard has foot and wing,
 Makes night into day
 By his fire-fly play.

III

Now for one touch of earth
 To draw his worth:
 See, I take this chrysoprase
 For the green I think it has,
 Yet only by a shot of light
 Is the soul in it put to flight!

IV

Or this essonite
 Blood-red on sight
 At a stab of light!
 My cochineal ring of glass
 Through which I let the white ray pass
 To snare the scarlet which it has!

After Death

V

This is my sapphire and I knew it
 Soon as I let daylight through it,
One stroke of heaven to true and blue it.
 But would I have surprise,
Trap all colors of all the skies,
 Lo, my diamond's polyglot eyes,
Only one white ball of dew
 To throw me orange, bullseye blue!

VI

Ah, but I can hear you say,
 This blue is only for a day!
I answer: 'T is but a little stone,
 So the blue in it soon is gone;
But take my gentianella star
 Which looks from such uncomputed far,
The pink of it will pinken my dawn
 Eons after the pith is gone!

VII

Soul is roundabout
 As light is, never out,
Never any room for doubt
 But soul is universal free
As light is to leap eternity,
 As light is to pierce my gem
To come to wealth of diadem,
 Get the fine pond-eye blue
By running a thumb of crystal through.

VIII

How truly I could not say
 Spirit is a part of clay,
Part of yonder mountain-make,
Nob on like an Easter cake!
Hunt for it in your pot of glass,
 Hunt where the rain has laid the grass,
Where my rose-ousel ties to a stem,
 No more is it a part of them
Than this twilight is part of the flame
 Of Sirius from which it came.

IX

There are the chalk and quartz of you,
 Body to let spirit through
To take on shape and color too,
 Beauty by every kind of mould
To no end, more than could be told
 Where spaces wait and the stars are gold;
Body to let spirit through

X

To give it another red or blue
 Than ever touched the eyes of you;
Body to focus soul, and so
 Shape it a new dog-rose glow
To glisten and always to lie
 Like star-pink on yonder sky.

XI

How young he was to have died,
 Gentle Edward—how young to go,
And I so young, and the field so wide
 Between us I could not know

After Death

What it meant that noon-auburn hour
He failed to bring me his prophet-flower.

XII

Tune-bug and frog-wallop of spring
Drew to an end of carolling,
As if they listened and knew
He would so soon say adieu
To all about him he could see,
His grass-lap, his jouncing bee
Full of flight and melody,
His bell-vine over the door
He should take to his heart no more.

XIII

Down over the green long lawn
His last step and look were now,
So soon he would be gone,
He of the spiritual brow,
Of the rich wide eyes, as if his sight
Were weighted with wealth of light—
To think of it that he would be gone,
Nevermore his sun-fed lawn
For him to creep and feast upon!

XIV

Did I think of him
For perfect eye and limb,
For the rose-bush look of cheek
To say so much, nor once to speak,
For the fine unworldly hand

Of such gentleness of command,
Then would I look across his lawn
To think of him as lost and gone.

XV

But that was of him was so fair
I could not see nor think it out,
Some ultra-being half hidden there,
Which was Beauty, past a doubt,
Like this flood of light is trying to break
Through my island gem to force a way
Out of it and beyond the clay
To come to crimson and violet-make.

XVI

Is he gone so far, do you think?
Look to yonder meadowink,
His eye of olive-coppered pink,
His song-burst—did it come
Of gullet or duodenum?
See how next he will lunge
Where the sun-beams plunge
Only to pack his eyes
Full of shining skies
To rain me his down-pour of song
In his bobbin-play—
Is he so far away?

XVII

Is man now at his best,
Or does spirit run him through
Like light to throw a lordlier blue
New shape across the west

To climb, and evermore to climb
 To lordlier purpose, more sublime
Than ever once could be seen
 By man in his small bowling-green—
Soul bound to take a new shape
 By passing through the vein and nape?

XVIII

That way I have him to not lose him!
 Body shaped his soul to use him
For such nobler purpose beyond,
 And so I must see him unbond
From earth, I must let him go
 To the new other high height
As if his soul were made of flight,
 While yet, in spite of all I know,
These tears—how the sun splits through
 To give them the salmon-spark and blue,
In spite of all my sorrow too!

XIX

My oxeye sandpiper will drink the light,
 Hop his hop, take his dip and bite,
 Yet will I measure his soul by his flight!

EAGLE SONG

THE rain, the cold rain in my eyes,
 And the mist
Where I seize my ledge by the iron wrist
For a start—there 's a way to rise
Alive and aloof if I look for skies.

Fog chokes my cheek of muttering
 Now I go
To strike for flight from this undertow
Of shallowness to hurl my wing
At storm-shot and the thunder-fling.

The blue cold blast at my throat,
 Pinch and chill,
To rise on—now for one tug of will
Where dark is what the whip-oak smote,
Where fire is a line the lightning wrote.

Up at it fair for a leap
 Into space,
Neither here nor there, but to mount all place
For one vasty sweep upon sweep—
I fetch heart-end-up to face the deep!

What odds the tug, so I make scope?
 A thing to do
Is to plow the thundrous fierce heaven through
For power which I get to rise, to grope,
Nor keep a quillful of fear, of hope.

Eagle Song

What of the masterful stroke of fire,
 So I see
How bafflement makes for that power in me
Which pitches to high and higher
Like the blossoming of a God's desire?

Pimple earth is what I would leap
 To escape
To where new Beauty takes nobler shape,
And on again, new deep to deep,
Now I hold one truth, there comes no sleep

Nor rest of purpose, nor end of plan
 Or power
I get to by striving each new hour
For mightiness to be most I can,
My no-end thought—flight without a plan.

Up through this black thick runs my run
 Above shroud,
Beyond swill-pool world, spit-fire cloud
To where one evermore sky is begun—
I beat cloud down to seize the sun!

A SHRIVING PEN

THE child was a beautiful girl,
In the careless keen whirl
 Of a girl;
Scarce a thought of herself, nor thought
How soul's sold and bought,
Nor dream of your street's
Puts and pits full of cheats,
 Not a thought.

Up country life served scarce a use;
There was little to choose
 Or to lose
But poor prints of a heart in each cheek—
How great hearts may not speak,
So they prick it to write
Through the cheek, red or white,
 Bold or weak!

Sun-up to sundown on her hills
Brought no aims, no ills,
 No thrills;
Half a poor little farm at her feet
For the small bread and meat;
Scarce a handfull of straw
To choke holes in a thaw,
 Stop the sleet.

A Shriving Pen

"But the town! Ah, me, but the town,
With its luck up and down,
Clerk or clown!

To take chances in life, win or not,
So you cast in your lot
At one sip of a breath,
Play the game to the death
On the spot!

"If I lose, to the spire and cowl
To deliver my soul
Free of toll;
You may trust a priest—he tells you so—
Since they see and they know
All there was or was not
Ere the stars were begot,
So they do.

"And I would know somewhat of this
Monster knowledge of his,
What it is;
Why all my stubbled days up here
For a mock, for a sneer?
Give me life's ring and rush,
Life with its fling and flush,
Cheap or dear!"

The passion to know, to do,
To feel just as you,
How it flew
Through her brain to the pit of her heart,
To a stop and a start,
Till the blood plunged and tore
Her soul to its core,
Half apart!

Here was her black-speckled sin:
She felt life begin

 From within,
Her longing to dominate fate,
To be useful and great;
'T was sin to step up,
Step down, stand or stoop,
 Love or hate.

Off, then, to one priest of the town,
In her polygon gown

 Dotted brown;
Then straight to a stall to confess
And pray for redress:
"Know my sin has been great,
For I pouted at fate,
 Nothing less."

The fat father, cooped in his sty,
Caught the droop of her eye,

 Maiden-shy;
Two lips curled out, two loops of flame
Of the fire whence they came,
Which was spread, hot and quick,
To her cheeks, like a kick
 Of her shame.

He too was drunken with youth,
This first high priest of ruth,

 Prince of Truth,
Till conscience swooned, paled away
Now passion took to play
With lips and lips on lips
For savage sensuous dips,
 Beast and prey!

A Shriving Pen

Six black days of a week of hell
Dragged them down as they fell,
 Till the knell
Of the seventh day, which was the Lord's day,
Rang them up and away,
The wild priest to his peers,
The child to her tears,
 So they say.

How their pomp and chime of High Mass,
Of bold splendor it has,
 How alas,
Their cold chant, their dominant dome,
Steel helmet of Rome,
Warned her off, shut her out!
Not a welcome about,
 Nor a home!

One hundred red robes sent their glare
Like a blush on the air
 And for fair
Swept the aisles and wings to the nave
In one blood-painted wave
Through each swell and fall
Of a chant, like a call
 Of her grave.

She had not a heart to step in
With her burden of sin
 At God's Inn;
Too brave to confess and discover
Her monk of a lover;
Never friend, save her star
Above her, far to far
 Above her!

Anthem past anthem sweeps the skies
Now tired evening sighs

Where it dies;

Blue-jeweled priests in scarlet wild
Over their chancel filed
To conjure up spell and spell
Of a way out of Hell—

But the child?

Calm and storm of song
Still break forth from their throng

Deep and long;

The monk was made cardinal undefiled,
Men bowed when he smiled,
For they sinned and confessed,
Kissed the cross and were blessed—

But the child?

ELSEWHERE

I

I 'VE waited (how long!) for you,
Whom I have not seen in this world as yet,
'Though I know you for solemn true,
And I have you to love—there 's the thing—
I have you to love for a whole life yet
Of jonquilest music summering
To drop not a leaf, since this much is true,
I have you at your best and new
If I have but the soul of you.

II

I 've footed my long years out
To know you not once in the woman world,
'Though you are there, of that no doubt,
My other part of me, twice as fair
'Though hidden, like a light is impearled
And I no cunning to trap it there,
So I keep my trust and my love of you
To lose you never—there 's a way to do
If I have but the soul of you.

III

Suppose you to come to me
To tie me to you—the altar-knot—

For what you could taste and touch and see
To chafe at, or to swallow joy,
To hover at each honey-pot,
Flutter, fly to lip-alloy,
Yet would be lacking that finer true
Vast sweetness which is always new
Now I have but the soul of you.

IV

Well I know what you will say
If you see it, this I have written here:
Bosom and love must have their way
Of worldishness to make out a case
Of life-living to add another year
Of multiplication of a race—
Yet they may have it this whole life through,
Ear-pink, bosomy vein-streak blue,
If I have but the soul of you.

V

The other one there, he took
Your flower-leaf cheek, budded lip,
Your eye which burns to a linnet-look,
He took your kiss and your hollow hand
You gave him—one day he shall let it slip
To crumble like a doll of sand—
He may have them to keep in view,
Your sunrise-eye, your heartfulness too,
If I have but the soul of you.

VI

For, think, am I not to know
My mate in the ample round worlds of God,

While he there may keep you to grow
To his lock of lips his whole life through,
While I put these arms 'round a breast of sod
In place of her whom my spirit knew?
For this life, yes, he may have you to mue,
And then my turn—then will I woo
To win the very soul of you.

VII

Even now that I stop to dream,
These eyes I close let a new light in
And I come to know how you speak and seem
When the bank of flesh is not there
To keep you down, nor a breath of sin,
And you come with your new-time kindlier care
And Beauty this world never knew,
Which I have to keep the wide ages through
If I have but the soul of you.

BREAD ON THE WATERS

God knows a robin flutes for love of song,
Not thinking of the prize
Which, perhaps, may come along,
Or may not, but keeps on fluting
For the prizes in his song.

A little way to go,
A littler thing to know,
But mightier soul to grow,
And am I not satisfied to have found a place
Where suns laugh while the great worlds chase
Each other out of time and space?

Have I need to whine
And the soul of me mine
And my power divine
To know I am an abundant part of what
Makes for power which the world has not,
Is not compounded to come to nought?

What is for me to miss
And the plain truth this
That I am all there is
Of what I see about these climbing spaces?
Without me they have neither eyes nor faces,
While everywhere and way my play and place is?

I

A girl was I as the butterfly hops,
An ear to hark where the woodcock chops,
An eye to the kinglark that splits his cloud
For a storm of song, and the Gods are proud.

Just a girl as most girls are,
 Little at hand, and love was far
And pale as my morning star.

Never I thought what love could be,
 Never I thought
I am part of immensity
 And more is evermore to be,
Finer and greater to be wrought
 Than ever I thought.

What a way life is to be going,
 Always a little less to be showing,
Always a little more to be growing!

So I bungalowed,
 So I swooned or I toed
The dance—there was my chance:
 The life of the soul is in the dance,
Pleasure 's the cake of circumstance!

There might be children in the street
 Of hungry ribs, naked feet—
Mine was the piccolo life and sweet.

There might be men would keep their hand
 To the shovel till they too were sand—
Were not the roses at my command?

One little life to know,
 A feather-flight or so,
A little puff and show
 And all is well done in the end, do you think,
And you have tricked the Gods by a wink
 At your game of feathers and apple-drink?

So I thought and so I did,
I toiled for what I could get
For the self in me—my whole heart was hid,
Nor love in my life was yet.

Earth was here—earth was enough,
I the puddle-bird to stick
My beak in where the mud was thick
Nor ever a thought of love,
Nor thought of what I could do
By greatness of heart like the best of you.

One autumn sort of a day,
Just as I had gone to play
At arrows to hit the popinjay,
Just as I had drawn my bow
Full length to let the arrow go,
My aim put straight as a dart
To try to split the hardened heart,
Lo, a touch at my shoulder!—
What could be gentler, bolder
Than such firm-fingered touch,
No gentleness like it such,
With "Will you not aim my way,
Yonder target is only clay,
Is nothing to hit, so you see
You waste your archery—
Will you not have a shot at me?"

Now I turned and now I saw
What a girl's heart hungers for,
My man of the handsome brow,
Of summer smile, rainbow-bow
And art of knowing when and how

Bread on the Waters

To make the most of what
Goes for trifle, yet counts so much,
The eye-beam and flower-touch
Of favor—his forget-me-not!

Never I saw him before,
My man of this hour!
What strong eyes he had, and more,
What yielding, what power
To look to be kind and true
As true noblemen do,
And what should a girl but say,
Her surprise of a way:
“My popinjay over there,
I hit it for fair,
And sure as the heart is of clay
My arrow will stay;
But soul, should I hit it, what then?
My shot might be vain,
So much I fear lest my dart
Would not cling in your heart!”

How I remember
That free September,
His straight lion look,
His mild smile he took
To tell me his thought,
This young yaupon-flower
Which he plucked and brought
From his cedar-bower,
The which I have kept
While the years have gone,
While my hope has slept,
While my soul was born!

Side by side each day
 We wandered in and out
Where the bell-robins play,
 Fritillaries pout,
Held fast to our task
 To watch new cloud display
One thin veil of sway
 To stop the sun from play,
See the sun unmask—
 Drifting now, now going
To my moon-shaped lake
 Where the swans were rowing,
Where the sand-heaps bake,
 Took an hour for tasting
Of each sweetened wind
 Till the flowers were thinned
Of breath and wasting—
 How my soul was pinned!
Did he not tell me of love,
 All that I ever knew,
How the struggle of life is enough,
 Is the best of it too
If you dodge the wrong and the rough,
 Keep the kind way and true.

Where the ground-pink is squandered
 In the woods,
Where pickabuds have wandered
 Into moods
Of unpremediated song
In the rafters, like a gong
 Full of glees,
We were in among the trees,
 In and out,

Bread on the Waters

After any flower you please,
 Caught the shout
Of the bobwhite in the breeze,
Caught the saw-song of the bees,
 Caught the smell
Of the frankincense of flowers
 And the knell
Of the moose-bird in his towers—
Where you go, go where you please,
What wonder like the wealth of these!

Now came his words to me of love
 As fell the redded leaves
In flocks about us—how soul unweaves
 At touches of sun, one touch enough—
I was his flower he should keep
 Till suns fall asleep;
His sign of dawn was my slip
 Of geranium lip;
One little toss of my hand
 A word of command;
Nothing his heart held in fee
 Save the image of me,
Like our lake there, one clear blue eye
 Held the print of the sky
As I held the print of his lips
 —So the lark sings and sips—
Since I could trust him, I knew,
 For masterful true,
Now my soul and my heart were gone
 And so wholly were his
I rather I never were born
 Than have him to miss,
So much in my heart he was and is!

The next day morning he was to come
To find me where the beetles drum,
Where my palm-birds cheep and chum
And honeysuckles hum.

The next day truly the great sun came,
Face as red as a tortured flame,
Looking like a face of shame
Because he never came.

Because he never came I could say
He had forgotten, went his way
After his afternoon of play
With me, his cat-paw play.

Could it be true, I thought, of all men,
That they love again and again,
Make so little of the pain,
Count the conquest vain?

All the long day I waited to know
If the truth could be truly so,
If he could leave me, could go,
Now that I loved him so.

Evening lay tucked in the willow boughs,
Tired ploughmen let go their plows,
Tired falcon forgot his spouse
Like my man and his vows.

Now are the wild woods full of him!
The lark in his zambomba limb
Tunes his tune to the voice of him!

Now my reed-bird is loud and plain,
Wraps his heart in such wild refrain,
Calls him to come to me once again.

Do I look to my purple flower,
 I see him there in his handsome power,
Or there where the stars drop their evening shower.

My meadow-brook will pass me by,
 Is dark and cold where the shadows die,
Yet comes again, passes me never by.

Is he gone away, I thought,
 Evermore gone from me and not
One word, and I so soon forgot?

By night I heard the high wind say
 There would come another day,
And always and always the higher way.

I could hear the mother bird shout
 For her little ones blown away,
Could see yonder sailor-cloud pout
 To lose the moon at her lighthouse-play.

My man is about me full the same,
 'Though he never came;
Is there among my pheasantry trees,
 Bows and straightens like one of these,
Ducks and whispers and tries to please.

Do I look to my hills beyond,
 To the bloodroot in the grass,
Watch these sword-lilies split the pond,
 Why there he is, and my world is glass
To capture and will not let him pass.

The warm wind is 'round me, hands and arms,
 At my neck and cheek with clinging palms—
'T is he with his spiritful of charms!

This is love, I begin to say,
 Large as soul, takes a larger way
Than to look to only what I may get
 By way of compensation, set
My heart on my man, as if to get
 My prize were life to the profit net!

This is love of all about me,
 Of all I ever saw or knew,
Not a beetle to doubt me
 But I shall be kind and true
To all the world about me
 By what I most may do,
And so I girt and stout me
 My most to be kind and true.

Another way to go,
 A larger world to know,
Deeper soul to show
 Than what I may wear in a shoe for size
Or pick at with one pair of eyes,
 And has not love left me more than wise?

He taught me love,
 My man of simplex thought;
Is that, in God's name, not enough,
 Or was there more he could have brought,
More he could have left behind
 Than love to largen my jump of mind

To see he is not gone,
 To see the thing so clear,
That soul means on and on,
 Means everywhere as here

Power reaches to compass more
 Than all which has gone before,
Something so nobler and other
 Than just my love of my lover-brother
That I have him too and more
 Than all which has gone before
To deal me this one truth plain:
 Small is one life in the soul's domain
By what I have in me to know
 Soul is King and will have it so.

Ah, but I hear you say,
 He is gone away,
Clean gone out of my life
 And I nor mother nor wife,
Nor he to hold me for dear
 As life is, nor bring me cheer,
Like my swallow trumps to his mate
 When dark broods and the moon is late,
And I 'm not to have him now and here.

Now and here make only parts
 Of this ocean of hearts;
I know my power and my place
 Where the planets race;
I know myself for the God
 Above crumbs and sod;
I know my way which is clear
 Beyond now and here
To compass all that I am
 Beyond trick and sham,
To make my way by my dower
 Of love, which is power;

Of Right, which royals my day,
 Has Right to pay;
Of Truth, which kingdoms this earth
 By one golden girth,
That I shall come to full power
 Above landlock and hour
To learn the trick to un-knee,
 Take flight to be free
To master spaces and breath
 High time above death,
Deal straight with eternity
 For what belongs to me,
And I shall have him, I know,
 For he too shall grow,
Sure I shall have him to keep
 Where the Gemini sleep,
Clean beyond moon-fields or Mars,
 In the streets of the stars!

II

Now to my work of life,
 To my honest strife,
To put my love to test,
 Do my best!

This is my alfalfa field,
 Full of purple useful yield
Of sweetness, which is growth
 To the purple blowth,
And here I am come to stay,
 Here will I take their way,
My flowers at their working-day—

They breathe their sweetness to fly
Higher than they, to touch the sky—
What matter if the jaw-jowls die?

Now to my work of life,
To my honest high strife:

Are there children now in the street
Of hungry ribs, naked feet,
Then is my life not all suckle-sweet.

Is there power I am to acquire
By conquest of each mean desire,
Then leaps this heart in me high and higher.

Is life my best by what I gain
Of soul above a world's domain,
Then is no breath of me puffed in vain.

Was I not born my day to do
My noblest, nor to have in view
More than my noblest to be and do?

Am I not to outclimb this sod,
Drink my tears, smash each smiting-rod,
Yet you think only God is God!

III

Such long years have passed in the new way!
I 've been foremost true!
Always I had the concord thing to say,
Spirit thing to do,
Hugged no happiness I could not share
With my brother there
In his tough path—I fetched him a lift
By my courage-gift,

Dragged him out of his hell of a ditch

To my highest pitch!

Always I kept my love of my man,

Yet always I kept

My fuller love, the large-hearted span,

Nor this heart has slept.

Only I thought in the world to do

What of me was first,

So well I knew the wrong other cue

In the end is curst.

All these years of patient doing,

So many years of soul in my work

For others, lifting, newing,

Nothing I would shunt or shirk,

And now there came my wonderful day:

The sun seemed to walk in my way,

So many organs swayed in the field

With each wind, as if the wind were heeled

In shoes of flowers which I caught,

And the wind went barefoot through the lot.

In I come to town,

There is my child of the street,

Pinched in close as a frown,

Hungry ribs, naked feet,

Little to hope he has,

People let the poor child pass

For they must go to their church

To spread feathers and pucker and perch.

My new day was begun:

I put the child in the sun,

Tumbled my organs in his lap,

Flung my smiles at my little chap,

Bread on the Waters

Caught the smutted face and palms
Close as life is in these arms,
Gave him my love and lips
As the sun in any brown flower dips
Till I had him smiling too
For joy just as any of you,
When—lo, a touch at my shoulder,
What could be gentler, bolder,
Than such firm-fingered touch,
No gentleness like it such,
With “There you have aimed my way,
Your arrow is gone through the clay,
Is clinging in the soul of me
Just by your perfect archery”—
There he was—oh, there he was,
My man there—there he stood,
After such years of pause,
As that first day in our pigeon wood
He loved me and I knew it
Each way he said and shew it,
And I, the thin-hearted girl,
Prided in my neck and curl
And pomp-walk and Roman pearl,
And he saw it, and so
Went his way, let me go,
Left me to climb and grow—

And now he comes again,
Keeps his same look, strong and plain,
Gentle, nothing vain;
Silver silvers the handsome brow,
Nought is gone of the rainbow-bow
Or art of knowing when and how

To find me after I have grown
Soul which he could claim and own—
One touch just and we were one,
One look without one thought—
Nought above the heart was wrought,
Silent as the burning sun
Love is—all my love and lips
Which I gave to my small brown flower
That tried to put up finger-tips
Through his mudded street and shower,
All my heart which I gave him
To try to raise and save him
I got back now from my man of love
As he drew me to him, such gentle touch,
No gentleness like it such,
Just the one touch enough—
As the sun and his columbine,
Two souls longing to combine—
And all my love which I gave
To the world to be true and brave
To do my most to help and save,
All of it now I have back again
Out of his great heart's domain,
All of it over and over again.
What a way life is to be going,
Always a little less to be showing,
Always a little more to be growing!
Never I thought what love could be,
Never I thought
I am part of immensity
And more is evermore to be,
Finer and greater to be wrought
Than ever I thought!

MORE AND HIGHER

I

BETTER you come up out of your slubber!
There 's a way to do,
One certain way for you
Greater than dodging just to pout and blubber;
Made, this world is, to get you going,
Climbing, knowing.

II

What thought is in your dreaming worth a puffin's puff
That, once you have come
To chew and hum,
Such sun-fly trick would make enough
Of purpose for life to be giving,
Your trick of living?

III

Up out of each little peaked low-life level
Have a mind to rise!
Look once about your skies
How their sun-drops dangle to leap and revel
To tie new gold into knots of blaze,
Bead your days!

IV

How many there are of them, worlds without ending,
 Just to show to you
 Who are thinking them through
 To find what their pretty blink is portending,
 How you, make reasoning what you may,
 Mean more than they.

V

You thought life an end of something, the while you knew
 There is no end—
 You saw a man unbend,
 Saw him bow? Fear you to bow the same way too
 At such new doorway to more glowing,
 Greater growing?

VI

Tree-perch or blue leaf or cyclamen have a way
 Of minding you, too,
 There is more of you
 Than all their new Beauty could try to say,
 More to be got at and gotten out
 Than eye-glad or pout.

VII

Take that man with bull-kick in his kindness,
 Pig-knuckles, they say,
 And a spiderly way
 Of biting hearts out—take his spirit-blindness
 And pinfish swallow, his gulp at a gnat,
 Soul of a rat,

VIII

I would say: there is much for him yet to do,
New worlds, perhaps,
Many a boost and lapse
Ere he come to comparison once with you!
He shall have his chance—more soul is to get,
Since all time is yet.

IX

I fight my way up from the thing below
I was once, so small
In the eye-sweep and spall
That no way was open but to try to grow
To mightier measurement, have my day
And my way.

X

So up I grew to this largest waist-size
Which a man may span
By his bellyful plan,
Yet I reach out beyond to more widening skies,
Since soul would grow 'though the skull-power stop,
Body drop.

XI

Would you think the end of the thing to be now
That you see what power
In life's closing last hour
Soul has, 'though this body may wince and bow,
Power to say "I am greater than just
This whiff of dust?"

XII

If greater, then have I grown to this:
 One ample new sphere,
 Different from here,
 That I may come more like the spirit is;
 More size, which looks to more power and space
 In endless place.

XIII

My Rosalie—that was a sun-down day
 Which crossed her hands
 For two velvet white bands,
 Pressed out her pink lip into blue cold clay—
 How she was gone, so fair, so soon,
 In her fine forenoon!

XIV

True, she was greater than men ever knew,
 As I could see plain
 By her soul-domain
 And kingdom-face, eyes of heaven's true blue
 Like sun-bubbles, meant for only one sweep
 Across the deep.

XV

I have her to know I must get me to what
 Was great in her heart,
 Get the sun-burst part
 And conquerer-kindness which the world has not,
 Before I may kneel at her train,
 Have her again.

XVI

That my stint and first purpose, so there may be
Such new ripened change
In my day-crop range
That nothing may pass which was meant for me,
Nor what shall have had a least cost
Be baffled or lost.

XVII

You may play this game of life as you choose—
Once you purpose clear
To confine it to here
Your plain truth is this: you will play to lose
If there be no star-lip to respond,
Nothing beyond.

XVIII

Life you may have, the whole dash and fling of it,
If what you get
In your gullet-net
Be the round-up crop and topmost thing of it!
Good it were as harvests of a hearse,
Sweet as a curse!

XIX

The smallness of life, the largeness of desire
To get to more worth
Than is dug out of earth,
And what so true a sign to point you higher?
The smallness of life, the largeness of desire
Mean more and higher.

NOT A WORD

I

A LIGHT out of the skies
Lay in his eyes;
One supple note to rejoice
Mellowed his voice;
His thought he took for others,
All men for brothers,
All things for what was right,
Like a bunch of might,
And what should he do
To have her see
He was royal true,
He was manful-free
To be his best,
His all he was
By whatever test
Of a human cause?
What should he do?—
He scarce could say
“I am royal-true
As the sun-blown day,
I come to you
In my royal way
Of integral soul
To be what I may

To compass the whole
High purpose of life
By my human strife
In my human day";
Nor he scarce could say
"Out of all the rest
There is no best,
But of all the many
I 'm perfect as any,
'Though I make no claim
To a human name
For what I have done
In my little run
Under the sun";
Nor he scarce could show,
By his to and fro,
What a power he was
For a human cause,
Since this muddy bubble
Of trick and trouble
Had plastered its frown
In his noble crown.
There 's my supple-jack vine
Beginning to crawl,
Will tuck up a tine
So tiny small
I wonder to see
Such soldiery,
I wonder to know
How tendril or toe
Could battle so,
Could reach to climb
Against arrow-rime
Through smut and choke

By never a stoop
Till flowers awoke
And purple drupe
For a masterstroke,
And never a word
Of a branch is heard.

II

How he loved her too,
And she would not yield!
How he gathered dew
Of his crow-flower field,
Little yellow beads
The peafinch needs
To match his eye
Like a dot of sky!—
There they lay an hour
Like eyes of the flower,
Let the yellow through
And purple too,
So she could see
How Beauty will shine
Through a thistle's pin,
Through fang or fin
Like a thing divine;
How Beauty will speak
By another power,
'Though the lip be weak
Or the life an hour,
Like the life and cheek
Of my little flower;
How Beauty will break
Into open day,
Nor a gain to take,

Nor a word to say
But "I am all I,
Whole perfect hope,
Am the lip and eye
Of your heliotrope,
Bloodspots in the healing moon,
I am each knell
Of your bell-tree bell,
I 'm the pink proud lap of June."

III

Sudden she looked
Into each blue eye
Where his stars were booked
Like an open sky,
Could see herself there,
Spirit and limb,
Fastened for fair
In the soul of him,
Claiming her share
Was the whole of him,
Once now she saw
In the blue deep eyes
What answered for
Vast spirit-size,
Saw the great heart too
In the perfect blue,
Her sun-like man
On the Zenith-plan
Of power and height,
Of celestial right
She saw in his eye,
Heard in his sigh

She knew for the whole
Of one perfect soul—
Two souls now in one
Like as sky and sun,
And never the word
Of a lip was heard,
Never the touch
Of a lip was such,
Nor ever such charm
Of a gentle arm
Put its endless span
'Round the neck of a man
As cheek to cheek
Of glow to glow
Not one could speak
For the love of them so.

TRAGEDY

Now lie there,
Put your new face
In its proper place,
Lie and die there,
Nor drop a word of it you said
Which put you fast in her heart instead
Of me, you dead!

Take her hand—
You will not know
How cold it is, so
Take the cold small hand,
Make the most of it, forget your lust
To come to quiet and be just,
You dust to dust!

Take her lips,
Swallow them now
For a bended bough
Of snow-shod tips!
I will be calm, you shall have your way
To find how such life has death to pay
In coins of clay.

How was it
You sought to crush
Such song-mated thrush
But because it

Pleased one hell-whim—you had scarce seen her
 When you must needs play mean and meaner,
 Hellish hyena?

Touch her eyes!
 They will not look
 Your way, nor once crook
 Aside from her skies,
 For see how they stare, so hold your breath
 Now her sweet night-heart reasoneth
 From youth to death!

What you said
 Would hurt not now
 The beautiful brow
 Is white as dead,
 Out of reach of you to hurt again,
 So run your tongue out to lick off the stain
 Since breath is vain.

Did you feel
 One stinging end,
 One whip of the bend
 Of my cold steel?
 She died by your hand, you by mine;
 Small use for either of us to whine
 At her decline!

I follow,
 So runs your log,
 Follow you, you dog,
 For one swallow
 Of your portion—we will make it right
 In another kind of day and night
 Just out of sight.

Tragedy

There was gain
For you, you thought,
Was not to be bought
By swink or pain,
As if you hoped by your choppy nods
At cheat, in a little game of sods,
To trick the Gods!

Your one creed
Was come to this,
That you should not miss,
For want of greed,
One pimperlion you could tear in two,
One finch to smash the red heart through
For joy to you.

Life was lust
For you to get,
Nor one mignonette,
One plum-leaf gust
Were worth your while to labor for!
You knew a way to hoodwink Law
By rule of claw!

Life was hope
For you and me
To live it to see
One wide high scope
Of opportunity to make most
Of what there was of us, play host
Instead of ghost.

You thought not!
Hell was to pay
In your kind of way,
Filth to be got,

A wren to ruin to scatter about,
 Life to be laughed at and puffed out
 'Twixt flip and pout.

No escape!
 Your time shall come,
 Your tap of a drum
 To dig and scrape
 And knuckle to it to wheel about
 To learn how you were not made to flout
 This soul-face out.

Heaven knows
 You scorned your best
 As one with the rest
 Where spirit grows
 Which gave you your chance to make your way
 To somewhat higher than this day
 Of animal play.

And if so
 You made the best
 Of your filthy breast
 To trip and go,
 So comes there law to be put good,
 One law of a better brotherhood
 Than your dog-mood.

Boys were we
 In those fair days
 At our play-ground plays
 Which come to me
 To choke the soul of me out of speech,
 To hang my heart up to stop and bleach,
 Friend out of reach!

Tragedy

Straight to you
I go in my prime
And my love-day time
The same way too,
For this: We must work it out some way
In another kind of night and day,
As she would say.

Three were we
In life, my friend,
To this bitter end,
I, you and she;
What I would hope is, now all is done,
Now this poor phaze of us has had its run,
We yet may be one.

CHARLOTTE

CHARLOTTE-wise was her way—

I knew Charlotte's ways,
The thing she had to say
Full of kind-worded praise,
The thing she went to do
For her thought of you:

"This flower out of my hat,
See, I give it you
For the water blue
You were looking at,
And this vine you liked
Where the grapes are spiked!

"Take the flowers, I pray of you!
They are not real, so they will last
Beyond my garden-grape of blue
Which I but yesterday picked for you
And, lo, the lip of it is past
With scarce a little taste of dew!

"They come and go, the wild flowers do,
Stay their short while just as you,
Bow their way out like you too;
But take these rye-rods in my bonnet,
All as if they grew there on it,
They will not die as the rye-fields do.

"This flower which came of moon and shade,
 Meant one certain day to fade,
Looks to me out of such moon-beam eye
 Between velvet and diamond dye
As knew once the climbing sky,
 So knows a way and a day on high.

"Mark my Japonica pot,
 So too this melilot
Now the clean sun sizzles
 Where the dew drizzles
Till I pluck one handful, blue
 As the quill-work of a cockatoo!

"There 's the needleful of dew,
 There 's the heavenful of flame,
But what of this spot of blue,
 Of where it goes, of whence it came?
Is there orange blossom or blue
 Plays outside the soul in you?

"Look you once again
 To this sombre rain:
Never a drop of it dropped in vain!
 Sky gave it, sky knows the knack
To take it back
 Ever and forever again.

"So I see my blue and my red
 Always in yonder sky
Where nothing is ever dead,
 Whence nothing has ever fled,
Where every world is high
 And gold-mannered, of blazing eye."

“Ah,” I said, “my Charlotte friend,
There 's all Beauty to no end
Which I see in your constant Heaven
Sprinkles dew-light or bold leven,
Yet once I look, and your eyes such blue,
I see all Heaven in the soul of you.”

À BRAS OUVERTS

SEE earth put patient arms up
Above flower or fruit-dropping valley-cup
In mountains towards the skies!
Look how they fine to rise,
Drop off dust below,
Take less hold of here
As they approach the clear
Till clay goes robed in snow
Whose jewelled crystal finger runs
The path above a million suns!
And if the hills would flee,
Then why not we,
Once the upshot hour is come,
Once the moon-birds peal and drum
Sonnetry 'round Elysium?

THE SYLPH SELF

HAVE fancy, just to my liking,
The dash of a viking;
Have power, most to my longing,
Dream dreaming and singing;
Make much of it, each little prop of an ear
 To the rear
To listen for men, to know if they follow—
How poor the whole of it, how hollow,
Seeing the leaping heart of me flew
 To you, only you!

Put gainfulness first—there 's the error
Which holds men in terror;
Settle what first best to have is
The lip of a mavis,
Flounce of the elm in purple summer,
 Or rummer
Of melony muscadine, otto of roses—
One true thing the whole of it shows is
How not the sweet best that you grew
 Was you, fairly you.

The brain of you thumping, knowing,
The heart of you glowing
For thought which is manly supreme
As a skylighted dream,

The Sylph Self

For power which could circle a Saturn of rings,
 Muzzle kings,
 While what of it when it is done and ended
 More than one sunburst, a moment splendid?
 What is the whole great first you may do
 But an inkling of you?

Hand at the helm for holding
 A world to your moulding;
 Your luck-pot life, the gold proud feather
 Of pink-ended weather
 To write you a name across sheets of sky
 Not to die;
 To put breath panting between your poet-pages
 To burn on the lips of all men for all ages
 Were nothing to me—I claimed what I knew
 To be soul, which is you.

Suppose this, suppose you never
 Were half an eye clever,
 Full poor in spirit, not knowing
 The gain-way for growing
 An eye to pierce or lip to elate
 Race or State,
 Would there be the less of you in behind?
 Is soul just blood-hungry parlor-trick mind,
 While the heart in me, all that is true,
 Goes longing for *you*?

So, when the end is, I fashion
 An end of all passion,
 An end of this circle-kick thinking,
 Of dozing and winking;
 I fashion two white hands made into a cross
 Above the corse,

Like the unknown X, not a sign of nothing,
But of value to find, a new betrothing,
And I clasp, through the gold and blue,
 Just soul—that is you.

GAMBLERS

Cock a bottle at the game,
Slip the leash to let the cork spit out
One small hiss of flame
For you to set fire to him—no doubt
How you meant to handle him now
That last card of yours would teach him how
To whiten to make you his low last bow.

Your tricks at him—what of that?
You ducked his brain in your bath of fire!
You bite like a rat
With venom sweetened to one desire
To pick his white throat up in your paws,
Only a gnat in a spider's claws
For the blood in him, your whole hellish cause.

Oh, so he took his chance
To play you back and the thing was fair
To a circumstance!
Fair to him, no doubt—he took his care—
But to you, how stands the case with you
And your jaw put back to bite him through?
Does the game play equally fair by you?

One of your weak ones was he,
Like a water-lip pouts to curl and break
At whims of the sea;
You had him fast, there was gold to take,

A wren to be chopped in your china jaws
Now you knew your man how light he was
For you to snap like a whip of straws.

His gold was there—all was his—
He came to it by life's troubled swink,
Which has come to this,
That you must have it now as you think
What his life was worth, what yours is not,
So by putting his shekels in your pot
You pump in his shoes full aliquot.

But do you?—one look to that:
He took his chances, he paid your price
You pummel at,
His soul gulped up by a cockatrice,
His life and gold too, with all he had
Of conflict in him to drive him mad
In such poor trip-up from good to bad.

The gain is to you—but look,
Your loss there, your soul-drop-out loss
I saw as you took,
The best of you gone, the man that was,
Your knuckle-work put to nicking, so
You think you can let your best part go
To keep on winning and thinking so!

He tried to get your ducats, too—
That I acknowledge, so was he small;
Be it that, would you
Not say he paid for it overall,
For you there you have his life and gold
Which, mark me, will one day slip your hold
When you seek him in the dark and cold

To put him right again—you
To hand him back both his life and soul
So no part work askew
To put up one rounded finest whole,
And you must square it with him, my friend;
Small matter how you trick to bend,
You 'll square it with him in the end.

But you, would you think the game
Has served you right, 'twixt him and you,
That you have no claim
On yourself to take this plainest view
Of the thing, that you be once put back
Where you were before you toed about track
To play him such fellish hellish knack?

Once he put shoulder to the wheel,
One wheel of fortune to make his way,
Had value to deal;
Your card was blank as popinjay,
Yet you played it fate-first, took your lick
At subterfuges, took your pick,
Just by one puny devilish trick

Which turned the tables that night,
Tumbled his fortune into your lap
Against God and right,
His throat made fast in your finger-trap
For you to play with—what shall it be,
All a loss to him eternally
And you full man-blown?—let us see:

The thing was this way, I vouch:
You prowled about with gluttonous eye
And an empty pouch
To pluck him before your day went by;

•

Now mark me this once again, my friend,
For one truth on which you may depend,
'T is you have been plucked to the ruffled end,

For what has a man to show
But the man in him, the soul-made man,
And whether or no
He prosper by the worldish plan,
Since here is the what-of-it clean through
Which you may hold fast for one thing true,
Not this whole life is a grain of you,

Since well I know how a man
Is more than the thing he sees or seeks
By his one-world plan
To count his life out in days and weeks,
More than the blue breath he has lost
By bee-bite or by fist of frost—
More is a man than his world has cost.

So shall you put yourself whole
To keep you so, since the one sure game
Of body and soul
Is to get one manfullest man, the same
As a lime-bush puts new tongues in quest
Of sky-shine, blue dew and the rest
To hand you one citron, the very best.

Put your gold down, take him up
Who lies there now, two lips as white
As plum-flower cup, ,
For your long hard task to put him right
Now he waits—one hand there seems to grope
At his brow like a fork of heliotrope
For one more grasp at life and hope!

MY WREN

WHERE now is my leaping wren
That is gone out of his emerald field,
May be to never come again
Where bottle-flower and stagger-bush yield
Such forest of ravishment,
Such purple heart, saffron scent?

His last note I heard
Was as the wind in an evening sky
About to fly away to die,
Was as that pale-faced word
Which I thought he said—good-bye!
Was he too gone away to die?

Pretty little perfect bird
In his whole waste of sky
Where only silence stirred,
And what was of him to die
Save his streakèd pongee-peak
Of feather, or his tattooed cheek?

His song—from nothing did it come,
To nothing is it gone
As night winds between shingles drum
And whistle and they pass on?
Look the wild spaces by all your care
There 's no "nothing" anywhere.

Once by his brook he stood
 To watch his image just below,
 While coax it as he would,
 The shadow would not come nor go
 Nor sing nor sigh—that way I think
 Soul is, just over the brink.

One noon-moon he was singing
 In his plum-field, each note
 Made such a silver ringing
 As never a soul could quote
 As up through his pile of dark
 Flashed his song like a spirit-spark.

Or over by my meadow wall
 How I could hear him call
 As if to draw me his way
 To get what he had to say
 Out of such divinity of heart,
 Watch how fine he played his part!

Did winds in tree-tops gong
 To interrupt his song,
 Quick would he leap to tune
 His key in keeping, tilt his rune
 To the rhapsody of noon
 Long as his day was long.

Do so many days go by
 That I forget, or I cannot tell
 One note now of your threnody
 That last day you sang farewell?
 What an outrider, how you went
 To make your nest in the firmament!

My Wren

Always have I thought
 What a little body you,
Yet what soul you brought,
 Left it with me too
That day I was your guest
 And you did your best

To tell me more than I knew,
 Your voice of a far-off land
And I looked and listened, while you
 Took slight hold with your tiny hand
In your yew-branch, as if to show
 You knew such nobler way to go.

Will you come back to me?
 May be never so!
More is to think of and see
 Your unending way you go
Through storm and moonbreak and dark
 With your harp of the lark.

Now I follow you to look
 Out on the way you took
Beyond your yew-nest and picture-brook
 For more than ever I knew,
Out in your eternity of blue,
 Where one day I shall go to you.

ELLA AND STELLA

I

So you think your way of doing
Is the best,
To get what most you can and to never mind the rest
And their ruing,
So you rise to power and plunder
And the other there goes under!

II

One moment, try a little thinking,
Half a wit
Will find, I think, one fatal law there just in back of it
To put you blinking,
Neither God nor man nor nation,
But the nature of creation.

III

Here is one example for showing,
Wholly true,
How what you yield for love of right comes all back to you
Without your knowing,
Not by way of compensation,
Just the nature of creation.

IV

Not once I thought of marrying—
Half and half
To make one whole so others should have a chance to laugh—
So I was tarrying
To think I could trick the kingdom
Of love in its endless Springdom.

V

Ella was true, but there was Stella
Firmly bent
That I should give myself to her, heart and soul intent,
Make haste to tell her
If I loved her—she was pretty
As a pear-flower, more 's the pity

VI

Since Ella nowise had her Beauty,
Could not boast
Such cherry laugh, purple eye as most men fancy most,
But just plain duty,
Love of right and one wild passion
To be honest and out of fashion.

VII

Yet her love of me, I knew it,
Was as great
As was Stella's, but modest, would linger and come late,
For so she shew it
By taking leave, always going
So her friend could have first showing!

VIII

Stella took another way of thinking,
 As you see
By how she held her ground, meant to keep her hold of me,
 No kind of shrinking,
Her truth this: Secure your inning,
Life 's a game and worth the winning.

IX

Ella, of herself never thinking
 To an end,
Would pull her own hope down to put hope up for a friend—
 I found her sinking
Her whole self out of sight by trying
To save another heart-ache, sighing,

X

Like that day she came to me for saying,
 All her might,
What a sweet girl Stella was, how true she was and bright—
 Not once betraying
Her love of me, but only pleading
Her friend's cause, no other heeding.

XI

Next day came Stella just to show me,
 For my sake,
That for me to think of Ella would be one vast mistake,
 Tried to show me
She was cold, could not love me,
Or she thought herself above me.

XII

So, once I saw for plain how Ella,
At a glance,
Would shun me just to give her friend the better chance,
I sought to tell her,
(It was honest I should tell her)
I could no way care for Stella,

XIII

Since now the fact was just her praises
Of her friend
Drew me to Ella, as a bee will drop to bend
Among his daises—
Ella was all love of duty,
I was fastened by such Beauty!

XIV

So I loved, so was I captured,
So I swear,
I could give soul and body to die for her right there
—Captured and raptured—
Yet she never could see really
Why I loved her and so dearly.

XV

Just her love-of-duty Beauty
With its power
Could win me, could hold me to close me like a flower,
Just Spirit-Beauty—
There 's the subtle domination
And nature of creation.

FOR LOVE

To arms for a ring of your steel,
 Spring of your heel!
A word and a blow, my man,
 For a country's need
 To cut and bleed,
There 's the ring of your glory-plan!
 Belt you your belt
 To the naked pelt;
 Tuck knife and shot
 For love of God
 In the killing-slot!
 Would you win me my way,
 You shall throttle to rip
The red rose out of a brother-lip,
 Have havoc to pay!

To horse for a wing of your zeal,
 Sting of your heel!
Front you your front to arms, to horse
 For a way to will,
 A day to kill,
There 's the core of a conqueror's cause!
 Shoulders to march
 Under gold blue arch;
 Buttons for pomp,
 High love of hell

For Love

And the slaughter-romp!
A woman's to win,
And the trick is this,
To let not one cat-eye bullet miss
The death-march in.

Cut loose for power to abet,
Glory to get!
What way else could you come a man
Of the eagle-swoop
And talon-scoop
To make for power on the killing plan?
Buttons for gold
And heart as cold!
Drum and bassoon
And bugle-pitch
To a coffin-tune!
Am I to be won
And you stop at cost?
What 'though the whole of a world be lost
If love be done!

Strike fire for tongues to your sword
So God be heard!
Pledge me your pledge to cut and kill
To carve you a name
In gunfire fame
For God's good hope and his Kingdom still!
Conscience to rest
And the better breast;
Death to all heart
And your love of man—
There 's the hero-plan!

A gun-crop creed,
 Your creed of the wise,
 That worlds are builded on sacrifice!
 What more 's to need?

Here 's to death, that love may rest
 In one new breast!

Here 's to love, that death may reap
 More love to spread
 Above the dead

So I have you in my bosom-keep
 For love like this:

A tooth and kiss
 For a gorgon's gust,
 The white fang-bite
 Of a tiger's lust
 And I am through!

What matters the dead,
 Or what new worlds were born to be bled
 So I have you?

To the strong the race—to the weak
 The white cold cheek!

Made was this world for more world-power
 To make him king
 Who could bite and sting

His way like a lynx to the harvest-hour
 To reap his most

Out of flesh and ghost,
 Prove him the man
 By a heart of steel
 On the hero-plan!

Is it not God's way,
 Power to bend

For Love

That all should yield to power in the end,
Death and decay?

This rose, tuck it inside your hilt—
The lips will wilt
While the stain will stay—one deep red
Of pluck in the jaw
Of all killing-law
For sign to you, like a spot of blood,
To die so you see
What death should be
Which may not speak,
Like a man should die
With power in his cheek—
Or, better, you kill
Your man, I say!
All wealth to him who can cut to slay
By God's sweet will!

By this shall you win me to wed,
Nor count the dead;
One sweet law, God made it so,
For means of grace
To en-soul a race,
All power to power, and the weak must go!
My arms to a kink
Of the elbow-pink,
My red lips you know
And keen hot heart
For one bosom-glow
To be yours, I vouch,
So you cut your way
By havoc death to a bridal-day
And conqueror's couch!

UNDER SNOW

DEEPEN the snow on her,
Now her peace has been spoken,
Now the dark path below has been broken;
She for whom faith spread so little,
From whom love plucked so little,
So very little!

Let the flakes near to her,
Her new sisters flounced in white
To tumble from Heaven into pits of night;
All 'round and near her let them lie,
Thin frozen friends, how low they fly,
How fast they die!

Would you fashion her dead
There, nothing there under the snow,
Or dropped as the just drop, gone as they go?
Hark how these lapsing snow-flakes sigh,
Deeper by far than doubt's low cry,
"Nothing to die!"

What wild anathema
To burst such thunder from a grave
Which could not clutch what were not there to save,
Sovereigns of earth in spirit stole,
Love, sorrow, wisdom, and the whole
To shape a soul!

Under Snow

Nothing to die? And yet
Heaven is just, each heart must crave
Somewhat still statelier across the grave;
While I, who see not, may not know
What eyeless other flowers will blow
Under the snow.

What 'though her heart were poor?
'T was all she had, all that Heaven
To her in her few days had ever given;
So much the larger grew her trust
That Heaven would call her from the dust,
And Heaven is just!

So lay her gently there,
In keeping of this white pure night,
Folded in arms of frozen light!
Soft be thy farewell, soft and slow,
Thy last whisper kind and low—
Deepen the snow.

PICKTHANK AND PRUDENCE

EXTRAVAGANZA

ABOUT Pickthank I must tell you somewhat,
What he is, what he is not;
What he is I could tell in a jiffy;
What he is not you would have to give me
Such wagon-load of days to tell
My story must lose half its spell.
The look of him is the look about
Of knowledge, nowl left out;
One level gaze, glass-eye style,
To squint an inch and miss a mile;
Plumb-jointed, and that king-born cut
Of comeliness and cock-robin strut
Would shame Apollo Belvedere
To see him pirouette and peer
As if almightiness were near;
Flash in him to let you think
Skylight bounded from his wink;
One topaz at his knuckles to leak
Light out like a lemon's cheek,
As if too sour at heart to speak;
Puffing gum-bucket at his mouth
As if he courted and sported drouth;
Let the tree-swallow once be heard,
And truth is—you have my word—

He 'll rip the regions out of the bird;
Once let his man-match hatch a cough
With growl in it or little scoff,
He 'll take the great gallop to be off!
If you say water is meant to flow,
He is sure to say you no
To prove how he can flap and crow;
Under his bella-sombra tree
To take his ease lord-sumptuously,
And the devil might take you or me;
The world he sizes by his stick,
He is born to have his lick,
Success is just a devilish trick,
So he is preordained to win
By cunning and his pretty shin,
Bull-brag and topaz-pin!

Prudence is a girl
Of the elfin cheek and curl
And superabounding eyes
Of high light and deep skies
With which she looks her part
She plays without an art,
For life goes leaping from her heart.
Gentle she is and so true
Her sweet way she looks to you
Out of confidence just,
You give her your whole heart and trust,
You go with her because you must.
Look there to the mountain-side
Where flowers gambol and bees hide
In fly-leaf, bush-babblers sing
For joy just, and heaven is king—
There she goes between thistle-fur

And song-brook among summer-stir
 So you cannot tell them apart from her!
 Now the fennel is in leaf,
 Now this month begins to sing,
 She is closest to her reef
 Of moss-rock, is carolling
 Like a lintie full of spring,
 When comes her Pickthank lover along,
 Cuts her thought short and her song
 With—

PICKTHANK

You will do well
 To think well of me,
 Take me for spell,
 For belamy,
 Seeing I am what I am,
 Nor an intermix of sham,
 Mightied to be ultra-true,
 Minded to look eons through,
 Hearted to be one with you,
 To make my way upon earth
 Only by my wealth of worth,
 For so you do certainly see
 I am more than men as they go,
 More than they could try to be,
 More than they could hope to know!
 Look to my Apollo-make,
 Phoibos Apollo they speak me now;
 See what caracole I take
 To sidle and make my bow
 As never man in the world knew how;
 What shoulder to what a turn;
 How my jacket-buttons burn

Like rockets in a new epergne!
 Taste is mine, by Heaven it is,
 And artful, and more than this,
 I make my target, hit or miss!
 Genius is mine, I know the click
 And whistle of his bailiwick,
 As this much I understand,
 'T is genius not to show your hand!
 Men have wondered I could be
 So much pure prosperity
 Never once to know a want,
 Never yet to go askaunt,
 Never, too, to make a vaunt!
 I 've a way of knowing how,
 I 've a way of knowing what,
 So I 'm nothing lacking now
 I have only you for thought,
 If only I had you for life,
 If only I had you for wife!

PRUDENCE

Being so much
 As you say you are
 For women to grutch,
 Men to par;
 Being so all
 Of what there is,
 Women look small
 For you to miss!
 What gift have I
 To match with you
 Who match the sky
 And this world too

As hangs the hawk
 'Twixt fire and dew
 Only to fork
 The wind to clew
 His wing to stalk
 The breathless blue?
 So great are you
 Beyond my sphere
 I bow to you,
 I hark and peer
 To get your true
 New whisper clear;
 To look to you
 As I look high
 As Yed to view
 Your frame of sky—
 So here is this truth for you to see,
 As truth it is and you must agree:
 You are too matchless good for me!

PICKTHANK

Ah, but yourself you overlook!
 Ourselves we are not to see;
 Sapphire is in this iris juke,
 Iris in every romping bee,
 Which only I have an eye to see.
 In my tree-tower my lark is free
 To lift his soul like a God in glee,
 Yet is his soul not a breath of thee.
 Watch your necklace-bird in his wings
 Where gold nestles and the pink edge clings
 Like royalty 'round the hearts of kings,

What count his hundred dyes
Matched with your soul which men call eyes—
Are they not only inverted skies,
Wholly the image of Paradise?
Watch the thousand lips on a river
Spit fire and dance and sliver
As if the sun had emptied his quiver—
While you watch, the same sun dips,
Yet adds never blush to your perfect lips.
Over you as worlds are high
Floats your larger other sky
Of soul-superiority;
Your eyes took the blue which is there,
Your cheek took the pink for its share,
Your brow the white of the whitèd air,
Yet as atoms look*they are small
Beside your heart to which I call,
Your soul which flies beyond them all.
Here goes our flower-bee in his field
Just to get the summer-yield—
See, he will snuggle his nest
Where sun snuggles and clover is best,
Just as he will line his path
Into afternoon for the lap it hath
Of guava and lemon bath
Only to pump at what sweet
Lies hidden in a thistle's teat
To rise high up to hover
Well above rue or soolaclover.
Thereso it is I put you there
Beyond in the supernatural air
To hover perfect and everywhere
As light does and I see not whence
It comes, or whither it goeth hence,

Till you are like all light which kings
The universal wanderings
Of atoms to sparkle them through,
Touch them with your Heaven of blue
So they may share your Heaven with you.
Atom am I, all the light are you
To lend me of your sky of blue
That I may share your Heaven with you.

PRUDENCE

Am I so much
As you say I am,
Nought like me such
In the diagram
Of worlds I see,
No star like me—
Am I like light
To reign above
Supernal flight,
Human love,
To take my place
Where the blue sky sits
Beyond your chase
Of baffled wits—
Do I hold to what
Is power in me
You question not,
My supremacy
Of heart and soul
To play my rôle
Above mink or bole,
Then is this truth for you to see,
As truth it is and you must agree:
I am too matchless good for thee!

NOT YET !

QUICK up under these eaves!
Draw in their ivy-net about us!
Quick, love, lest blood should spot the leaves,
Lest his wild steel should rip and rout us!

Stand you here dark as death!
Heard you not our swish of arms?
One moment, while I drop a breath:
I was on your ledge of Cripple Farms;

Your brother, sword in hand,
Leaped out from a shadow of a rock,
Struck me across my shoulder-band
With "Draw, now, coward for the shock!"

One thousand iron stars
Shot out and up in half a twinkle—
Knives to spit fire between our scars,
Then sip blood across the tinkle.

Thrust upon thrust was sent,
Lunge by lunge was caught and parried
For this, because two souls were bent
On being one, though never married.

More passes, pass by pass
Back to the rock—then one monster swing,
Which spilt him like a thread of glass,
Made these mountains yelp and ring,

Slick as shot to his feet,
Then at me by one murderous blow!
I ducked behind the rock and fleet
As breath struck up at him from below.

His sabre caught an edge
Of the mighty trap, struck it square
Between the ribs, which sent the ledge
To atoms 'round the howling air.

"So will I send you too"
He brawled, then dealt one wild-eyed stroke
I dodged to run his shoulder through
Snap upon the instant that he spoke.

"That and that for you,
Take that" he shouted and lost his head!
I could have run him through and through
To leave him to the eagles and the dead,

But quick as strange enough
The sun's palm struck him across the face
Till I could see your look, my love,
Your gentle look which marks your race.

I could have struck you down
As lightly, then, as cut him through;
Your eyes, back-seated in his frown,
Pinned me captive—'t was a look from you!

I turned and fetched his sword
One swinging blow above the hilt,
Which sent it plowing up the sward
Right where his blood would have been spilt;

Not Yet!

And, then, "Hold up, my friend!
You 're in the right, I am wrong;
For right is king till breath shall end,
King above small and great and strong."

And then, "Here is my sword!
Only Love is conqueror to-day;
With it take my hand and word,
This marriage shall be solemnized when you say."

So I left him there
To string my offer about his thought;
Well—he may yield, but have a care,
All his fury up to top is wrought.

Give him but time to think;
He will know I could not mean you wrong;
Passion and Love are at the brink,
Swords are weak—only Love is strong.

Made was this world for love;
Men have drained it down to thirst of care,
Put iron bars about, above,
And man is his own prisoner everywhere.

Not to be trusted, then?
This is God's first law for you and me?
The world is ripe with savage men,
So we must be handcuffed?—let us see:

Do I not trust a friend,
Stand him on his honor, man for man?
Will he betray me in the end,
Trample on my trust because he can?

Not Yet!

1121

For honor comes of trust:
Stand him on his honor, man for man;
He does not stand because he must,
He does not slip me because he can.

If honor come of trust,
Then do not shackle me to my friend,
Else he may stand because he must
With half a mind to slip me in the end.

So, too, would Love be free
To be trusted once to try full wings;
If trusted never by you or me,
How may he leap to nobler things?

How shall he wheel to flights
Which wing a world up from common clod
To circle about pale blue heights
A little nearer the soul of God?

Yet not yet—not just yet!
We could not leave half a world behind;
They might remember to forget—
Right is kind—make your way always kind.

So must we stop to wait—
Much patience to help a little on;
Thin atoms shape a planet's fate,
Shape a shapelier world when we are gone.

Only to-day, there 's all!
To-morrow another sun must rise;
What 'though I do not hear the call
To wake, if I helped to clear the skies!

SUNRISE REVERIE

ONE way is up to God,
Another, to pull him down to you,
 And old or new,
And evident or topmost odd,
This one thing I hold in view,
That nothing I see about
 Is worth a doubt,

Or worth my faith to see
What there is in it that I should mind
 To lose or find
When this plain truth comes so straight to me:
I leave the world behind,
Each new wish, new ken, new gain,
 Yet I remain.

One after one I drop
The thing in this world I came to rate
 For proper great,
An eye out always to some new top
I took for coronal fate,
And always to mark it vain—
 Yet I remain.

Whatever I may get
Which once I strove for by trouble-cup strife
 For very life

Leaves one thing lacking but better yet,
A new bud straight above my knife
To climb to before I clip
 The citron lip.

I may not understand
The whole, since there is no whole for me
 Which I may see,
No finite in an infinite hand,
No past, all things to be,
And I and my climbing heart
 One clinging part.

I make from small to grow
To larger than what I see around
 In sky or ground,
As one after one my idols go
I thought once diamonded, profound—
So as my world smalls I see
 The more in me.

Put this down, then, for true,
That I must be moving—this no place
 To end a race
Of heart-leaps such as I and you,
But starter just, to set the pace
So I gather full and fair
 To the thing and square.

Put this down, too, for right:
What world I gain I lose in the end,
 Harvest and friend,
Yet is there left me myself in sight;
So is it, I will contend,

Sunrise Reverie

That the one thing clean above sky and sod
Is Man the God;

Opportunity to do
What he will, you leave the handcuffs off
And space enough,
Nor try to shape him to God or you,
He to ripen in the rough,
And that wise you put the test
Which gets his best,

He the man to become
More of him as this life plumps and spills
Nor once fulfills—
Not you to dare to strike him dumb,
Nor cake him to taste and frills
Which pack your fancy—he too
As wise as you,

But not your will, perhaps,
Or gentler, with not the iron-stuff
Or gut enough
To butt against you lantern-chaps
Who see, not the man, but your rough
Cheap Heaven or a gain to gain—
How monstrous vain,

Seeing, as I have seen,
How the thing I seek will wrinkle up
Like a poppy-cup,
How lush-like ever it may have been
Or wondrous in the summing up,
Dust-heap and vacant and vain—
Yet I remain.

Not one thing I may get
 Outside of me, whatsoever Heaven
 Is seized or given,
 Could compensate just a jet
 For self-made power from which I was driven
 By bribe or threat or pain
 To clutch at gain.

What is there I would keep
 Forever, of things men strive at so?
 Or would I know
 This life I have of cark and sleep,
 Bee-treacle or porgy-blow,
 Or that man I call a friend,
 Would never end?

Take planeted sun and suns'
 Vast star-stuff to dot eternal place
 For me to face—
 I count more worlds like the nearer ones
 I know of, yet not a trace
 Of spirit such as I see
 Is all of me.

They would not fill me up,
 Rounded bold eons of flame and dew
 I 'm wanted to,
 Nor put one drop in my morrow-cup,
 Nor flash my path, nor point me through
 To where I must come one day
 By another way.

To want somewhat, to add
 To my star-field one more strip of sky
 Or sunstone eye

Sunrise Reverie

For more worlds coupled to what I had,
Would leave me with this same I
Larger than they, as before,
And vastly more.

So is man great enough
To outreach what he may touch or see
Eternally
In earth here or those domes above
Of what now is or shall be,
That he may come straight to this,
How greater he is

Than what he pants to get,
The thing itself, be it clod or star
Or Subahdar,
From sun-sweep to mignonette,
That he may see, near and far,
How the uttermost fetch is man
And man and man,

Not heaps of gold nor suns
Nor one thing thought of that can be seen,
By which I mean:
Man dogs a path the spirit runs,
Small matter what his catch hath been,
As over the star-spotted whole
Is Man the Soul;

Not heaps of hope to make,
Nor God to get to, nor Heaven to gain,
Since that were vain
For such as strive or my meaning take,
That all which he may obtain

Counts only to make him man
On the spirit-plan.

Nor matters it what end
I aim at, be it God or peace or gain
I would attain
To pay me for loss of field or friend,
Comes there this full truth again:
Be recompense great or small,
This man is all.

Made was the world for man,
He not to be tyranted by God or Spook,
Priest or Book,
So he come to power by the nobler plan
Each new stalk of blossom took,
To make of him more each day
To force his way

By power of virtue, will,
Whole heartfulness, self-dependant might
By what is right,
Autocracy of soul until
He come to have no gain in sight
Nor triumph above the sod
But Man the God

To lord it over death
By power of mighty whole heart-ring true,
Endurance too,
Soul-soulfulness to one fine sweet breath
No God may snuff out or undo,
And he shall have eyes to scan
All power in man.

Sunrise Reverie

Let me suppose I place
My God in his Heaven for power so
 I come to know
His will to bow to it, take his ways,
Knock under, beg "yes" or "no,"
Will I, by such puppet-plan,
 Come more the man?

Will I, by fear or faint,
By duck-under to Power that is,
 Do more than this:
Put me inside such snug restraint
For one certain path to cowardice?
May I, within such diagram,
 Grow all I am?

Not up to God, nor yet
To pull him down to you, but to gain,
 By might and main,
Such power in you as shall set
The soul of you to law and reign
God-fashion, nor count the odds,
 Since "Ye are Gods."

VIRTUTE, NON ASTUTIA

So you think man great
By bulge of pate,
By what he thinks,
Soul measured by sprints and links,
By power to plot,
Cut Gordian knot,
And men are Gods
If they find the odds
Between dyx
And dyz,
As if things were complex
In divinity!

Man is great,
So you have said,
By his postulate,
By his round of head
If he measure up a sun,
Find the path the planets run,
Swing a sword
To grave his word,
Scatter letters
To his betters,
Dig his fathom xyz-ly,
Great if he think keen and freely.

Man is great,
So you have taught,
If he propagate
New matchless thought
By which to lift
His multitude
Just to boast his gift
Of giving good.
Man is great,
Yet you shall see,
To link his fate
With sublimity,
To dare to do his soulfullest best,
Blessèd if only the world be blest.

Mark you this spot
By the corner-end
Of our resting-lot—
There the willows bend,
Wild flowers are there
To play their part,
To yield their heart
To this clasping air—
What shall he say
Who is gone away,
Who lies here now
As the dead know how
Under his yoke
Of scarlet oak
With its big brown elbow-bough?

He could not write,
He could not sing;
His was one might
Of mastering

Almighty ends
By little means,
So the moons were friends,
Flowers were queens,
Each leaf was a book of veins,
Spirit was there,
Power and to spare,
Heaven in the ditch and rains.

Across his hill
Grasses are warm;
About his mill
Is his cricket farm,
A note in E sharp
Like an August harp;
Each moon-fern flirts
In velvet skirts;
Boon in a bush,
Talk in a leaf,
Such evening hush
Between pond and reef!

I see his plow
Where he left it last,
His dumping-scow,
Powder-blast;
His box of nails
And knots are there,
His flocks of quails
In the riddled air
As he was once,
By force of good,
To level his brunts
At evilhood,

Virtute, Non Astutia

To hold to his art
Of doing his part
By his arm and heart.

Little he knew
Of x or z;
Wholly he grew
To do and be,
Held prosperity in fee,
For life with him went honestly
To uppermost endeavor,
If blunt or clever,
To keep one law
The planets write,
Fineness and height
Worth climbing for,
So he 's king alone,
By my word he is,
To mount his throne
Of precipice.

His little brood
He leaves behind;
They take his good,
Keep his heart and mind,
Hang to his ways,
Harvest his crops
Of laurel-bays
When summer stops,
Build steeples of corn,
Birds for bells,
So soul is born
Where the wind-heap knells.

What good he was,
That they get
By law of cause
And coronet—
They are mood of him
And trued of him
While so they climb
Into lofty time
To look back now
To the cricket farm,
Pick and plow,
Meadow balm,
This much to see :
Man is great to grow
Sublimity
By virtue so
To last when he is gone—
So good in a man passes on and on.

Will they not keep
His mighty heart
To sow and reap,
Play counterpart
To what he did
His simple way
He piloted
In his little day,
Put virtue first
By one strong arm,
Put wrong to worst,
Keep his spirit-charm
To play true and late,
Which uncastles Fate?—

So he examples on and on,
So a man speaks when he is gone.

I knew him then,
I know them now,
His little ones—ten,
Each of noble brow,
All the make-up of kinging men,
All the father over again.
They lead me down
To where he lies
When the leaves are brown,
When the wine-field dies—
They take me by the hand
In a knowing way
To have me understand
All they have to say,
Which is more than Plato's masterpiece—
Soul is great in the hearts of these.

They will grow, I said,
Beyond the dead;
They will ripe to bloom
About his tomb,
Flowers of Paradise
Handsomere than the wise,
Columns of State
Greater than the great
By Beauty, which is Power,
By Power, which is Beauty
In moon or flower
To engender heart,
Give soul a start
Past the passing hour.

Down we sit,
Children and I,
In our grassquit fit
To capture sky
And the tuning world
And the bumping air
Like our grassquit whirled
In his summer there.

He lies below,
They hover above;
They come and go,
They bring their love,
Train the white jacinth
About his bed,
Prop the corinth
Above his head—
His is the soul of them
To the jacket's hem
For masterful endeavor
Beyond what is clever,
So they sweeten their voice
Like a gift of joys,
They make the most
Of this climbing ghost,
Like flocks of trumpet-birds
They silver his words—
So a man speaks on and on,
Is with us after he is gone.

ELBOWS

You love work—why of course—
I see it in you,
Such round-up of unbottled force,
 Knotted sinew
As task could not hope to withstand
If you put shin to it, head and hand.

Genius is love of work,
So you are clean at it, my friend,
No aim being yours to trick to shirk
 To dodge an end,
Since I now know you by snug study
For twice the size of a duddy-cuddy.

Most folk to look to you
Would doubt your breath of soul is this,
To keep life's labor-licks in view
 So not to miss
Hack at something, small matter what,
So you get your licks in, hit or not.

Who could have thought you knew
The trick of life is, peg by peg,
To peg away at it, dead or new,
 Thistle or skeg,
So you get any kind of scar
To wear—what matters it what you are

If you stick to your move
With never an idle hand?
Here is a thing you go to prove
 You understand,
How small appears the spiritual notion
If men make life perpetual motion!

You write!—ah, so—I see!
Suppose you get a pen in tow
To take a hand at it for me,
 So well I know
Your great freshet of sun-pool smile
And look of light—no pickle-stale style.

That last monologue of yours
Put me guessing how many times
I wore your thought, whole tens and scores,
 Without the rhymes—
We think alike, as matter of course,
Only this difference of elbow-force!

Small use we both should think,
For that were waste if I have your brains;
Suppose now you paddle at the ink
 To take all pains
To square your elbow for style of mimes
While I ring down the trumpet-rhymes.

For see, for once, this truth:
Never you thought one human thought
Since you were bottled up by youth
 Which was not wrought
By so many thousand heads before
You could not reckon to foot the score.

All men think—catch at that—
 They think bright well, too, I 'll have you know,
 Before you try for laureate
 Or furbelow;
 Yet is there left them this pale need
 Of more of your pumping elbow-speed.

Genius is common catch
 As any end of a pretty trick
 Snapped in a game of parlor-match
 Arithmetic—
 One hard real want of men has been
 More stomach back of the eye-light keen.

Well, you have it, my chum,
 Full belliness you, full up,
 Whether it come of treacle-rum
 Or moly-cup,
 So stick to your stomach and my brains
 And we 'll have pastime to count the gains!

Force—put peg in there,
 You who can suck your longest breath
 To squirt my thought out, never you care
 For life or death—
 Force shall man you to take the brunt,
 Put you mightfully to the front

And I your spirit-part
 With my white nostril, pit-sunk eye,
 To put my candle-glow to your art
 Clean capapie,
 While you, having swallowed fire,
 Will belch my flame up to blow it higher.

Just to look to your chops
And red-skin cheek of bloatful puff
And a farmer would look to his crops
 For kernel enough
To give you full face-value—you see
That jowl was a lucky thing for me!

Jest aside, somehow I thought
Soul is value to make for way
And width and power, 'though it may be not
 In one life or day,
Since value is value—prisoned pearl
Will one day capture to lord an earl.

You will come out like the hidden star
Which takes whole cons to throw one torch
To a purpose to where we are
 For landlight or scorch;
One agate will take all time to blue;
Doubt not all time was made for you.

There then 's the why I thought
This soul of mine would stand for power
Whether I wrote a line or not,
 Lived a life or an hour;
Yet peg away at it, fine or coarse,
You of the fire-new elbow-force!

FEARFULNESS

OVER my garden-gate
And the hour was late
And he came whistling up the lawn
Looking his best to look upon,
And I, who only the day before
Saw him duck and trim
To my rival more
Of his gallantry
Than ever to me—
Should I smile and sweeten to him?

Is there a way to know
What a man will do
Once he is out of sight of you
And free as a hawk to come and go?
She is one pretty-looking woman,
Eyes of hibiscus-blue
So wholly human
And wondrous true
I saw him prefer
To keep his best front and flower for her.

Yet why he comes to me
Just wasting his hours
In pretty talk like perfidy
As if to trick me by smiles and flowers?

How could he love her and love me too,

I should like to know?

Here 's a howdy-do,

A pipe to blow,

He in my heart for fair,

Yet jasmine-sweet to the other there!

Never I thought of that,

How a man may be

Tricky-trappy as a cat

To make a fool of the heart of me,

And for what, and all of it for what

Was the thing I thought

As I saw him now

At his handsome bow

And best to look upon,

And he there whistling up the lawn.

Right as he came my way

I turned to a flower,

My branch of globularia,

To see if the lips would turn to play

Their tiny mighty shower

Of sweetness and pink

Just to let me think

He could not put away

My love of him so soon

And just this dahlia-day of June.

There as he came I turned

As if I neither saw

Nor took a thought of him or care

Of what he purposed or angled for,

While all the sweet time I chilled and burned

To think of him there,

To know he was near
And so wondrous dear,
And I to lose him now
With his blindfold-face and clouded brow

To never see my love
Was wider than hers,
Strong as death and more than enough
To gladden him as a south wind stirs
The bobolink to song—there my flower
Was saying to me now:

Great love is a power,
Knows the when and how—
When, from my rose-bush bough,
I gave him such welcome, you know how,

As you know too the way
A girl will cover
Her heart-sting from her gainly lover
Just to see what he has to say,
To try to read him once through and through
If she may unknot
The puzzle in him, seek
To try him, make him speak
If he will or not—
There was my way I angled and thought

As now I bent my head
To look to the grass
To see if the new arbutus said
“You are all he thinks of, all he has”—
Poked the stems with my sunshade-point,
Nothing was out of joint,
Only my restless heart,
My school-girlish art,

I a whole soulful to tell
How I loved him so true and well.

"But she has blue wide eyes,
The other one has,
Sky-lighted, and she looks linnet-wise,
While never would she let you pass,
And you must stop for a word with her,
The which you prefer
To a life with me—
So you see I see
How a man may be
Double and treble and quarterly.

"How may a man do this:
To think of a girl
As wholly only for always his
From shoe-string up to temple-curl,
Yet look away to another to fly
To her lip and eye
As if there were more
For him to adore
Than soul has to give?
Love shall be true to be love to live."

A figpecker dropped to sing
In a branch of plum
Like he were doing his best to ring
New lyrics in his Elysium,
Each new note like a word from him
Begging her to forbear:
Love was more than a whim,
More than a life to spare,
Power was love and truth
And she could trust to his heart of youth.

"No doubt her eye is blue,"

He lazily said,

"Yet so are the skies and eyes of you;

Her lips, too, are rounded and red,

Her brow like a throne of soul on high,

Yet you are the same,

And she not to blame

For such blue in her eye—

Blue-bell eyes, catawba lips,

And, lo, the honey-fly dips and sips!

"Only the shock of clay,

Never a grain of soul

Is there in her eyes to dance and play

As sky whistles or wind-beams bowl!

Think you a man thinks a thing of eyes,

Of the quill of a nose,

When the thing he spies

Is spirit which blows

Into Beauty as rich

As bells of gold in your garden-ditch?

"Much as her lips are red,

Much as her eyes are blue,

Now all has been circum-said

I 'll tell the truth of the thing to you:

Because her lips were red,

Because her eyes were blue,

Because the tilt of her head

And hand was like you,

I could not pass her by

Since you were there in her lip and eye

"As there you are to see

In my fence of phlox,

Just as my lemon-flower holds one bee
 Shut in the one sun-wonder box—
He leaves the outside pink he eyed
 For the heart-sweet deep inside,
 Prisoner to stay
 To his latest day—
 Could her blue outside eyes undo
My love of the inside soul in you ?”

A FRIEND

OH, and you should have seen him!
What a face to unscreen him
And yet to come between him
And what men thought he was after,
One dish of peace, cup of laughter
This world counts for so much,
Yet so beyond his touch!

Kind he was to the fine fibre,
Was constantest subscriber
To the highest point of view
Of the universe or you—
Always he looked to you-ward,
Careless as a drunken steward
If you looked to him or not,
Of what he lost, of what he got,
So he should manage to do
His best turn for me, for you.

His was not fatuous concern
About pea-bobble feathers,
How much the sky shall churn
To give us a pocketful of weathers,
How that small man takes such chance,
Dodges heavy circumstance,
Lifts his soul to foot the dance,
Makes a life of hats and pants.

Close would he watch for half a day
 A wryneck in a clump of quick
To see his eye toss, hear him pick
 And rummage for his life his way
For all there was was good of it
 He saw or understood of it,
Lived to love his tiny life
 For the hunger in it or strife.

Never thumb-screwed thought was his,
 Freedom was not battered down;
Life, he said, was precipice,
 A way to climb, ample crown
To no end of zenith to capture
 Power—there was his rapture
To know he could climb and climb
 To all purpose and no end of time.

Nothing he knew to fear,
 Since man is his own God, and here
Master of his own destiny,
 Maker of what he is to be,
Power in him to rise
 Beyond the limbo of skies,
Nought to encoward him, and so
 He knew a way to do and go
High as the soul may know.

One would speak him: "You do not come
 Our Gay-Day to our Kettledrum;
How little you look to care
 For what we offer to you there,
Thumb-talk and grog to spare,
 Women in carded hair!

You let the world go by
Hands down, you and your climbing eye."

"Never I let the world go by!
I live in it to do my much
Or little, my purpose such
I monarchize my destiny
By what I am, by what I do,
Sure as yonder yellow and blue
Cut the bold thunder-cloud through
Always to play at yellow and blue."

"Would you build us a church," another said,
So our Christ may be heralded?"

"Not Christ, but love in the world is what
You need to boost your human thought
Above church, beyond worshipping
To grapple with this real thing:
Man for master, man for king,
Man to come supra-worldish great
By love to learn to dominate
Beyond your little belt of tape
And symbol, shape a shapelier shape.

"Yonder is your cathedral,
Your heap of gold—you gave your all;
Yet yonder, only next door,
Your city of the sick and poor;
You give your gold to God,
His children to the sod,
And this your altar for voucher,
As if God were jaws and hungry butcher.

"You do well for the round reward
You claim of the paymaster, God;

Always you dodge the rough of it,
 You whiten at a cuff of it,
Never you work for love of it!
 Or you play right for fear
If you play wrong God will spear
 To prick a nerve, start a tear.

"As if I am not to be
 My best for love of mastery,
For love of the thing I do
 Strong and clean as the sweep of blue
High sky I look and travel to;
 As if I am not to get
Most of me, nor mind the let,
 Nor mind your Book of bribe and threat!

"Not for fear of the law,
 But for love of it I go
Straight to what I straighten for,
 My most I am, the best I know
To make my way by force
 Of virtue and a conqueror's course
Of kindness, of what is true
 Of the God in me I largen to
For not a fear but He shall nod
 Assent and I my own Christ and God."

Just a loud-hearted girl was I,
 Ran as summer runs in leaves
Where the thistles and robins fly,
 Bees whistle, Oregon weaves
Sun-song into nests of thought
 I flew to as eagles fly
Out against the unknown sky

Of everywhere, and not
A way to fall, a place to die.

My Friend, and he so great,
And I so loved him—he
So nested in the heart in me
I would watch and scarce could wait
His coming his morning hour
To bring me his trumpet-lily flower
To liken me to it and to say:
Being is not for a day and hour!
Yonder what fountains of night-light play,
Worlds which come and go their way,
Yet is all Being there come to stay!

Once was a child to the wayside tost
As any waif the waves have lost;
The child could not know a thing
Of this world and its hankering
To crush out what is weak,
To not let an angel speak
If he have not the iron cone
Of skull, muscle of blood and bone;
Nothing the small child knew
Of what this brave world likes to do
To split the perfect heart in two.

There as the small poor child
Looked to him, purred and smiled,
He could not wait, but out of all harms
Gathered the waif to his heart and arms,
Gave her his love he had and shelter
From sin-bite, from hell-pelter,
Lured her up to be strong,

Fed her on thought and song,
Loved her his true life long.

Never to her could be such another,
Such consummate soul of a brother
And friend and lover to do
The thing always which was kind and true,
He so ultra-worldly great
As not in this life to hesitate
To do his best, come what would
Of loss to him or any good,
While so as his life went by
Beauty rushed to him out of his sky
As evening clouds get the kingcup dye.

Now no sooner has she grown
To girlhood, her morning's morn,
Than she is one day left alone,
Looks for her friend and he is gone
As a star behind a cloud, and I doubt
And whimper and think the light is out,
As if what God gives could be taken,
As if human hope could be shaken
By what I see about
Where only the clouds go out,
Never the flash of a star
To reach me from no end of far!

The child was I to the wayside tost;
The girl am I, and my friend is lost;
What, then, of this midwinter thought:
Cold is king, summer is nought
And I shall have him no more
True and gentle as before,
But all of him which was meant to last,

A Friend

Beauty which the skies hold fast,
Is withered, and his day is past?

Put an ear to what sweep of tune
My lark shouts to this pompous noon
Wheeling 'round the wheeling moon!

Put an ear to the ground,
Catch the whisper of each breeze
Through the violets—is there found
Any lip like one of these,

Any such whisper to tell
How I loved him, any farewell
Among the grasses where he lies,
Any sign that this orange bell
Hugs my heart less because it dies?

LONGINGS OF AN ACOLYTE

I APPREHEND this earth for man was made
As ground under foot is for root and spade
And the power of flowers—man for master
To the last ditch, and no disaster
To a true soul, you lying pastor!

I apprehend I am put up to be
My unique scope of majesty,
Which comes not of subserviency,
Of the poltroon trickery of monks
Who play at threats like troops of skunks
At barnyard practice—better I scoff
At safe distance to snicker and keep off!

I apprehend life has meaning
More than any kind of careening
About God to quob or to droop,
To parade your bombastic stoop
Of worship, make me least of all,
My thought as wide as your pew is small,
Your God to dilate if I limp and crawl!

I apprehend I am put up to do
My highmost as I am clean through
And not the slap of a lip of you
To nail me to your cross of thought
And I am to be sold and bought,
And I am to be what I am not.

I apprehend the blue in yonder ceiling
Of space is blue as this flower is blue
Which never doubled thumb for kneeling,
But strikes at Heaven, straight at it too,
To swallow storm, pocket new blue
To stand there straight as the straight Heavens do,
All its own unique unity too.

I apprehend I am meant to flower
Into my empyrean of power
And not to be clipped, and not to cower
To your God or you to play wax
Between the fingers of your lacks
To come to nothing, to come to you
To take your print and bugaboo.

I apprehend it is meant for me
Not to be bowing and scraping to God,
Humble as any humble-bee
Content in his one honey-pod
To suck, to give up sovereignty,
To dip his soul in the sod.

Oh for a wing to fly and be free,
Free as a wind tickles among leaves,
Free of these knuckle-gems, this majesty
Of pomp-light which so wholly bereaves
Brain of power to be thinking,
Puts me to my knees to be shrinking
As a newt shrivels in a strong storm—
As if this gabata could keep me warm,
This doctored draught of thought know a way
Of dealing me the light of day,
This candlestick, this altar-top cup
Show me the truth of things bottom up,

Foot-foremost and inside out—
 Oh give me your chance to kick and doubt!
 Give me your chance to be ever great
 Never because I see the bait,
 But wholly highly to float above it,
 Greatness only because I love it!

How like a twinge I fear to think,
 Lest God be there to snap his wink,
 There to snap and snuff me out
 If I grow bluff enough to doubt!
 Which way to turn if I go?
 Follow my nose or your toe?
 Little, I 'm thinking, comes of thought
 If I 'm to be what I am not,
 You the great truth to be sought!

Oh for a breath of honest field
 Where dizzy grasses straight and yield
 Each its own way since was begun
 Independence below the sun!
 Yonder cottage sits in the rye,
 Nut orchard and lake next by,
 A thousand sheep on the hills,
 Nothing known of your crooked ills,
 Supper nights and city pills—
 Here is the breath of Heaven
 Like a breath of spirit driven;
 Whence it cometh, where it goes
 Who cares, who is there knows?
 Walk would I my walk to see,
 Talk would I my talk to be,
 Pounce on my truth so to go
 My way my soul beckons, so

What care I for your potted strut
Among altars, your heaving gut
Of promise of your Heaven in view?
By Heaven I 'll not have Heaven with you!

Oh for one tortoise-colored cottage
 To sit in the rye,
Majestic by its mighty shortage,
 By the lake next by,
By the way the chimney-swallows light
 To stay over night,
Tapestry of bindweed close about
 The rain-water spout,
My couch just under the roof at night
 When the rains play light
To give me a taste of what is wrought
 Beyond human thought
So high over oboe or bassoon,
 Just spirit in tune;
I to my orcharding, to my crop
 Of orris and hop:
Voice in the wind and window shutter
 One word to utter,
That I am vastways greater than what
 Comes of hops or thought,
Meant to be Commodore of my fleet
 Of all flying sweet
About my meadows or through my barn
 To my mountain tarn;
Valley-flowers, the bull-brier to gather,
 To have them rather
Than any stripe of gimp or galloon
 You sport in prune;

Sirgangs matched to the sweet of a tree
 To canticle me;
 And she—why, she also would be there
 In her raven hair,
 Eyes twice deep unconscious true,
 All the heart all through,
 Such the pink of a lip in her cheek
 I think it will speak,
 Such the rhapsody in her voice
 Of a harp of joys
 As sends the wind, by her carol driven,
 To carol in Heaven—
 She, of an evening and twice as fair,
 To be by me there,
 We the triumphant heart together,
 Nor thought of whether
 You in your pickle-wisdom approve
 Of our day of love—
 Ay-vine above, just over our door,
 To drop us such store
 Of strong contentment as only springs
 Of such power as swings
 All soul at this universe of fate
 To stand lasting great,
 Force against force so to trample down
 Whip-snap and frown
 By virtue of superlative Right,
 I God in my might,
 And your bold See-Bull may bellow-gong
 To your coward throng,
 May plaster their faces with your thought
 Till their soul be nought
 But your soul which is printed there
 In fact and for fair

Longings of an Acolyte

As any other mouldable clay
 Takes the potter's play—
We two there in our cottage door
 Twisting hellebore,
We two only, just I and my love
 God and Goddess enough
To throne our thought in yonder spaces
 Where every place is
For every purpose and dream and end
 And undying friend,
Where every here is and hereafter
 Of climbing rafter,
All things surmounting to more and more
 Than all heretofore—
Fathomless place of power that I
May ripen by the power I ply.

Such a girl once I knew in her prime,
I in my prime too;
Near it was about lilac time,
Spring kept the flowers in view
As I kept her, my flower, in heart,
And Fall might come, play its part,
Put sickle to summer, yet was I
Closer than ever to my sky
Where my flowers refuse to die
Because their sky is made of June,
Made of a zenith always noon.
Girl and boy, we there together,
Danced like robins through the hether,
Light and free as wind and feather,
Two hearts to the top of summer,
Cooked such fancies in the sun,
Hunted so the honey-plumber,

Saw the wax-flower pop and fun,
 Galloped as a cloud is driven,
 Just the bright side up to Heaven—
 Such her rich white tiny hand,
 Nameless Beauty to understand,
 Yet so secret as spirit land—

She about to put her lip
 Flower-like up to my sun,
 Her first taste, take her dip
 Of life, her life just begun,
 When you came—there I saw you come
 Pumping your low reverend hum
 Of buncombe, of how life is vain,
 A thing to lose, that way to gain
 Another and a fairer life
 Than heartful mother, flawless wife—
 As if you could make it plain
 Greatness breeds by love of gain!

A few laps of your fustian-tongue,
 You masterful, she so young
 As not to know soul is to keep
 Possession of as the breath I reap,
 She passed your way, went she with you
 Into her dungeon—the air is blue
 In your dungeon, poison through
 To the death-bite, hellish too
 To pin spirit, spit it through
 To the quick so never one word
 Above "Your Reverence" be heard.

There she lies now in her bed;
 There she dies too—good as dead;

Longings of an Acolyte

Never knew a nobler thing
Than simpering and withering
To win Heaven, to buy her place,
Pay the price, her wasted face,
Her mean portion, cursèd case
In exchange for Elysium-lot,
As if this spirit could be bought!

Never came her chance to know
Life is one God's way to go,
Give and take, blow for blow,
To hammer back the Furies so
I come to somewhat, I am more
Than whining poodle at your door
To worship, knuckle down, implore,
As if I am not meant to be
All the God there goes in me
Down to the God's eternity!

Never was open to her to know
Life is one Godfullest way to go
To masterdom between kiss and blow,
Day-storm of flowers meant to melt
To sweetness if the night-storm pelt.

Never she knew there is coward to play,
Coward to run from the world away,
Coward to hide in your drowsy swamp,
Coward to dwindle at your pomp,
Coward to dodge a world which grows
Beauty by the chisel-blows,
Coward to hide behind a cross,
Take the gain and not the loss!
Be the way no matter how hard,
Who would fall from power, play coward?

There so she passes away
 Out of her life of day,
 Out of her rights of a woman
 To play the God, play human,
 Gather power in the world to do
 Noblest, which is kind and true
 For never any Heaven in view,
 For fear of neither God nor you,
 Help another to it too—
 So there she withers like a fork
 Of phoenix on your dungeon-stalk.

Next you turn to me,
 Dart your poison fang,
 Spit and hiss decree,
 Let me feel the pang,
 I as young as not
 Once to doubt of you
 If you have a thought
 Which is free or true.

Came you like a thief
 Prowling in my night,
 Gave me your belief,
 Which is lack of light,
 Caught me by the slack
 Of my slouchy mind
 Just to hold me back,
 Keep me well behind
 What is best in youth,
 All my love of truth,
 All myself, forsooth—
 There 's your poison tooth!

Longings of an Acolyte

Here I drool in plight
Like a wad of dough,
Subject to your might,
You that shaped me so
I should take your tricks,
Take your nightmare mix
Of low candle-light
And great altar-height,
Keep your Creed for blight,
Keep your Hell for fright,
Keep your Heaven in sight.

You are my kind Father-Priest;
You love souls, so much at least
As any bull-rat loves his feast;
Your cheap chant enslaves and dumbs,
Spittles through your tiger-gums,
Holds me in your brood of thumbs.

Breathe I to be overawed
Once I hear you yelping "Lord"?
Law, not Lord, contrives to lord it,
Mankind made to be law-lorded,
Never dominioned by your God
Or you—always Law is Lord.

Man first, God next,
My pulpiter—there's your text!
God in the universe for what
Makes me master, makes not
God to rule my spleen, my thought
So I come to take your trot,
Your bit to jounce in my teeth,
Your hand at the very breath I breathe.

Man first, God next,
 My Creedy—mark the text!
 Give my brother man his chance
 To outkingdom circumstance;
 Give him of power to over-master
 Monarchy of all disaster
 To outcompass his belt of earth
 For soul and for all soul is worth;
 Give him his chance to undo fate
 By strugglement, to shape his gait
 By conquest of all evil state
 To sovereignty unlorded great;
 Give him knowledge to unknow
 Your goshawk-wisdom, power to show
 His self-side, his great gait to go,
 Man his own man, if or no.

Give him of all power which swings
 The soul of things,
 Fearnought he, love-all he,
 Power for soul-supremacy,
 He his own subject, not yours,
 By the Self he stores,
 He of a lung which is free
 To hurl his truth at sovereignty
 Other than his sovereign self,
 Go his own great gait to go,
 Man his own God, if or no.

This is such pleasant day,
 The sun blinks overhead,
 Blinks diamond light, corundum red,
 Lets the two cross-colors play
 While I play prisoner, I play dead.

Longings of an Acolyte

Such is the pleasant day
Tortoise-flower is in dress,
Bull-spink knows what notes to play
To tell the wind his loveliness,
While she, my one faded flower
Crushed in your condor-claws, shall cower,
Shall die away to tell your power
How to subterhuman it grew,
Points the porbeagle beast in you.

Oh, to be again together,
Girl and boy as that time when
We swallowed sun-farm weather
Out of reach of Gods and men,
Sang like swallows in the leaves,
Buttoned heart to heart, so saw
Only love to ripen for,
Only what spirit achieves,
Scooped the tall grass between fingers
—How life goes, love lingers—
Watched our shadows in the glass
The lake holds to not let us pass
Where we walked while there we talked
So never once one chogset balked—
There I articulated my first truth,
Which is love, which evermore is love—
Love is priest and power enough!

Oh, to be together again,
Our cottage sitting in the rye,
Cheek up to the tickling rain,
Cheek to cheek, just she and I
For any joy, any pain
Good could come of, life to do

Masterfully fearless true,
 Cloud to-day, sun to-morrow,
 Payment of what life we borrow
 In full and in joy and in power
 To match and master any hour
 Of brutishness with teeth in it,
 We to king and ring and breathe in it.

Oh, to be together again,
 Pull dye-root, plow the plain,
 Have a way and a face
 And a play and a grace
 Of our own, and at least
 Never pest of a priest
 —How surpassingly out of place
 You and your good gridiron face!—
 Just our love to be kind,
 Just our love to be great,
 Just our love to be blind
 To you and your pompous prate
 And altar-dance, your tricky state,
 Your keen gut to dominate
 So I drink your poison theme,
 So I drop my kingdom-dream,
 I the subject, you supreme!

Winds may bugle, pretty winds,
 Bird-wing broaden as it thins;
 Snappy tirade of the storm
 Blush the lily, give it form;
 Just his power to sally high
 Lengthen power in the eagle's eye;
 Bright oat-fields may wave, may laugh,
 Toss tassels, toss idle chaff,

Yet I shall nevermore be there
For quaff of it, swallow my share,
Suck the unencumbered air;
Never shall I paddle among leaves,
Dibble where the water-crow weaves,
My love in hand when for her
Moon-winds wait—how they defer,
Hold their breath, refuse to stir
Once there comes one step of her!—
What counts it all to me now,
Bush-fruit, clean eagle-bough,
Or any thought or any how,
And I but pooh-bird in my pen,
All the old chaff over again,
Back in the clutches of Gods and men?

THE NIGHT OF THE BIG WIND

IRELAND

SHOCK in the window shutter,
Tub in the gutter
With the wind,
Oh what a wind,
And the lightning,
Dry as drouth,
Stabbing-tricks,
A fork of licks
Like a serpent's mouth—
Trees for brutes,
Legs of the stork
Pick up their roots,
Stalk and balk—
All a lead sky
Of the haggard eye,
Breath in it,
Death in it,
Hungry knife
To swallow life—
Tyrant gust
Grinds his chop,
Mountain dust
Takes leap to flop
Like cinders thrust

The Night of the Big Wind

From a cannon's crop—
Earth strikes out,
Sky strikes under,
Fling and pout
And croon of thunder,
Tornado-shout,
Bawling wonder—
Clouds are in rings
To chain the sky,
Terrors are kings,
Soul is shy
When the devil sings
And the hell is high—
Wanton folly
Jumps to take
Swamp or holly,
Rouse the lake,
Bend the brushes,
Fright the spink,
Call the thrushes
Down to shrink—
Ground-hog huddles
In his cell,
Mouths and muddles
"All is well"—
Wolves are cowed,
Whelps are beaten,
Pastures plowed
And chewed and eaten—
Dogs in the wind
Like feathers sent
To be slued and pinned
In the firmament—
Shanties on wing

To plow the sky,
 Chaos for king
 For bellowing
 In bog and rye—
 Moon-chat borne
 Where his wing is shorn,
 Throat is torn—
 Bell-buoy gong
 Subdued in song
 And the note is long—
 And then the rain
 Like drops of thought
 That hell is vain
 To bring to nought
 All the plummy grain,
 All the raisin-plot
 Which will fruit again
 In spite of power
 Which whips the plain,
 Snaffles the flower,
 Breaks earth in vain
 To stop an hour
 Of the flower-power
 To yellow again.

Belle Ella and I are there too—she is my wild-flower out of my field—the huge storm makes targets of us two—think you we are there to yield, to play pigwidgeon, play trembling flower, fall to worshipping the storm for its power?—one thing is true, and true enough, we are there to yield to love, our God-greatened power and the whole of it, rain and flame, body and soul of it to a purpose and an end of doubt, to shut the crush of the wind-whip out. Are we posted behind an oak only to dodge the leven-stroke, dodge what the flood-

winds pelt and soak? Do we think of our hide, of how the fire-fork pricked and shied, not of our heart with its fire inside? How the winds may pinch and shriek we mind not—they die down in a week—any riot in a cloud ceases, the great star-clusters crowd, halt overhead, look clean and proud—we too halt overhead in thought, we follow on in bosom, while how the wind sweats matters not, nor how its tone is pompous-gruesome—we live inside, heart inside, power of will inside—outwardness has changed and died, but what of this soul inside, soul which never moth may fret, soul which never storm shall wet, soul which histories do not forget? What of a heaven of fillibuster, what of any cuff or bluster of any wind?—soul has been broadened, never thinned, while we two in our hearts are one to fight the peerless omnipotent sun, to beat down what is outside, make a kingdom of soul to bride new regions where scope is wide because we are unravelled, untied—storm against storm, while without a doubt our hearts bar the tigerish typhoon out.

MY ROSE

My ripe rose in her hair!
The twice I looked I saw it there
In a satin nest and satisfied air,
My South Sea rose tilted oblique,
Face part hid, as if in pique,
Like a young moon caught in the quartered cheek.

Hark for a word with you,
My truant rose, and you stick there true
To her who is false in thought and thew!
I snuggled you there in your ivy nest
To take my message, do your best
To make my whole heart manifest.

Last night just at her side,
Just as the moon stood bloodroot-dyed
By a cloud which opened its veins and died,
I fastened you by my trick of care
In the corner temple of her hair
To plead for me with your pheasant stare.

This lock of moss in turn
Gave she me with such concern,
Her invitation to return
And claim her, I would think, when she said:
Come again soon as a day is dead
And the moon in heaven makes a day instead.

My Rose

The next night so am I
Come again where the moonbeams fly
Between the leaves in her vine of Ay—
I count the leaves, I count to see
If she is true as love must be
To hold my soul by the love in me.

I count my leaves again,
I make the number each time ten:
"She loves me, she loves me not," and then
Always there 's the last zero-spot
Always to say she loves me not
As ten times ten in the end is nought.

Straight through her lattice-bush
Her whisper creeps—I hark and hush
And wonder at it: Could the thrush
Have caught her tone of tune, the while
I listen, nor I see the guile,
I think my thrush there all the while,

When, now behind the screen
My falsetto-girl is seen,
Only her bush of lilac between
My rival and me—there she keeps
Her lips alive as the pewee cheeps,
Snares him too by her twinkle-peeps.

Never my rival knows
But she is his, such truth she shows
Her way her light soul tricks and glows
To hand him my flower out of her hair,
My rose for her keeping I nestled there—
And now he has it, let him beware!

For next he looks between
 The cross-ribs of her lilac-screen
 And I am there to be pinned and seen
 Who came to keep my word so soon,
 As flies the moon-lark towards his moon
 To spill his heart in his April tune.

True is all trick uncouth,
 Nor aught so fine as the heart of youth
 Playing at only the trick of truth,
 For now he is up in arms,
 Love is only an army of harms,
 While what of her pill-peppered shawl of charms

Now he may see inside
 Where devils many try to hide?
 "Oh, love is deep and the world is wide,
 And fish as good as was ever caught!
 Nothing of nothing is mostly wrought,
 And I 'm to be hoodwinked an atom not,"

As through the gate he 's off,
 Scarce a thought his hat to doff,
 Only the little choking cough
 To mind her his love has been choked,
 Her underhandedness uncloaked,
 And truth and trick are not to be yoked.

Right as he goes to quit,
 Disgust and torment in him knit,
 Lets the Furies hiss and spit,
 Flings he my flower across the path
 By all the fury which he hath
 To show her his basketful of wrath.

My rose I pluck again,
 One leaf I pluck out of it, then
 I call him back: "We are brother-men,
 We played our hearts and you think we lost
 For this, because our hearts were crossed,
 And you see only one side—the cost!

"Take you this leaf to you,
 This rose-leaf out of my rose, and too
 See that you keep it your wide life through;
 Forever to you 't is a lip to tell
 There 's more in the soul than Heaven or Hell,
 To wit, the triumph of doing well."

Then—my hand to him—then:
 "We 're brother-breathers, brother-men;
 We 've been fooled again and again,
 Did you think? But see how Right has schooled,
 How only Law and Law have ruled,
 How only the fooler has been fooled:

"For we are arm in arm,
 Our moping maid has lost her charm
 Like a cloud if the sun remove his palm.—
 She will learn—life is a day
 To learn to take the higher way
 Than cockle-shell sham, cat-paw play."

So are you left to me,
 My rose—you hold pink in fee,
 And thought, for you give thought to me,
 This thought: She learned, as years went by,
 Only one way is to do and die,
 The way the Gods know—Arcturus-high!

FOR A SIGN

Puccoon to be seen,
Knotted drops of green
Through his vest,
And, between,
Filigree at its best,
And, beside,
He wore purple for his hide,
And again
He could imitate the grain
By a little yellow vein
In his cuff,
Breadth of buff,
Cochineal enough
Would swamp the thing he said
In boisterous red.

Such a taste
About the waist
As taste entails,
And, then,
Such his flock of fingernails,
Each one like a perfect pen
As if it meant to write,
Never penny-thought in sight—
Head so straight
As a chapel-gate

For a Sign

To point him great,
And, too,
Much too straight to look to you—
Silk in the collar,
His last dollar
For pins and puff
To hide the rough,
Knee-boots to let you know
The up and go
And power of show,
Shin-shape for the round and climb
Of fashion women think sublime,
He the high pride of pudding-time!

Monday is the morning
He goes adorning
Pelt and thew,
Not once to be new,
Not to put the bow-tie true,
But apes the hang
Or fiddle-twang
Or Pelopid in you!
There 's his gown
Of astrakan,
His cheek of down
To mark him man,
And so
Straight as the string of a bow
He straightens to show
How straight he can go;
High as the top of his hat
He is aiming at;
Fine as the fin of his boot
His hop is and cute,

And so
I see him reel and blow,
Bauble to fashion-fetch
His pinch and stretch
To look heighty,
Show mighty.

This is the shop
He is to pass,
Yet must he stop
At the window-glass
To look in to see
What a window has
For opals in glee,
For a thumb of gold
To sprint in his chain,
Match the Sappho-fold,
Catch the yellow vein.

This is the shop
He cannot pass;
Here is his stop
At the window-glass,
While all he will see
Is himself to pas,
His image for repartee
For much as to say:
"You may look in here
Any look, any way,
Yet one point is clear,
I am come to stay
Just to look to you,
To hold to you too—
I am yourself,
Rib-arc and elf

For a Sign

All over again,
I 've the puccoon and sheen,
I 've the empty chain
And filigree-green,
Nor more is nor less
Than yourself to be seen
In this window-press."

That still is he balked
By the picture in check,
Which is blued and chalked
Like a pigeon's neck,
He may not look else
Than straight where he looks
At his yellowish gelts,
Nor he sees in the shop
Where the hang-bird hooks
Or the hat-birds drop,
Where chestnut widgeon
Prods silver pigeon,
Nor sees he aught he would share
Save just himself in the window there.

In the shop inside
Is my lady, too,
To the counter tied
By the hats in view
Modelled Easter-new,
By the ribbon-make
Of a waist in lake,
By the toupee-bloom
Of an eagle's plume,
While there outside
Stands he statue-still,

This man like pride
In his windowsill,
Whom she thinks she knows
By his label of rose,
By his elbow-bows,
Buttons in his coat to prize
For wider, wiser than his eyes.

Yet she takes him for a sign,
Shop-sign in a window put,
Keeps he so his plump in line,
Never ever stirs a foot
For looking so in the glass
To catch his image, while alas
His image will not let him pass—
Sees a man but himself, 't is so
He shall neither see nor go!

Here 's the shop-lord, he will know,
Him she will ask:
"Yonder wooden elbow-bow
Looking in the window so,
What a marvellous mask!
So much like my man is he,
Him who keeps his heart for me,
I must think of him as such,
Just my man to see and touch;
Wonder is it art could shape
Likeness such in chin and nape;
Copy his lip, my man's lip,
Sunshine-eye, fashion-hip,
Nor one peevish wrinkle skip
He carries in his upper brow—
How could art have done it—how?"

For a Sign

"Never art, only nature
Made the creature;
Nor is he a sign
Made of paint and pine,
Nor yet is he mine!
So looks it, as you say,
He must be yours, your clay,
Your confounded popinjay
For you, and yet for a sign
For you that you draw the line
Between the chalk in his cheek
And the soul there to speak;
Between the lip which he has
And his lip in the glass
Which could tell
Love as quick and as well;
Between the light in his eye
And the glass-light by;
Between the dumb breath at his mouth
And the wind sailing south—
Draw the line, if you can,
'Twixt the sign and the man
And you have it—you have him glued
To himself, cheek and mood,
Glued to his print in the glass
For the likeness it has,
Glued to himself like a knot
In a tree, and forgot
Is the world 'round about,
I and you counted out,
You and your love and your hold,
I and my shop and his gold.

"Let him stand for a sign,
 He shall be mine!
 Look how the people will stop,
 Pour into my shop
 And they see him just there
 With his stare
 Of unbottled surprise
 Looking scholarly wise,
 Looking in so to see
 Philomel, filigree,
 Anything my window shows,
 Sample buckles, ample rose,
 Pin-garnets, and they think he sees
 My trinkets and their trick to please,
 Never any little inkling
 All his eyes at himself are twinkling.

"Take him for a sign, you too,
 For he is for you
 For a sign that you halt,
 Shun a man for such fault,
 Leave him there, snug in his shelf,
 All his eyes on himself.

"Only himself he may see, so
 Never he sees you or me, so
 Leave him to his seeing—so!"

THE STARS

STEP the stars among,
Hide-and-seeking throng;
How they weep to laugh
As we cradle chaff!
How they laugh!

In and out of sight,
Sprinkled over night,
How they laugh to weep
As we shun the deep!
How they weep!

Not a breathless word
From the void is heard;
Not a look nor sound
From the vast around,
Not a sound.

Do they heed us not?
Are we quite forgot
Where their thundering globes
Coil in clustered lobes,
Flaming robes?

Do they know us not
In this lonely spot?

The Stars

1183

Can they pass us by
As they hear us cry,
See us die?

Only true and fair
On the stillest air
Is the sign they make
To a heart they wake,
Woo and take.

Is mere human speech
All the planets preach?
Is this "yes" and "no"
All the spaces sow,
All they grow?

From Orion's rings
To the least of things
Tongues are on the air,
Speech is everywhere,
True and fair.

Tell me, perfect star
In your solemn far,
Burning green to white,
Burning low to light,
Day and night,

Surely thou must be
The other half of me;
What art thou apart
From my spirit's art,
From the heart?

Not another star
Whether near or far

The Stars

Canst thou find or flee;
Thou canst call but me,
Only me.

There in the still deep
Where pounding breakers leap
From the savage air,
From a sea of care,
Thou art there!

Out of a wild sky
Whose wingèd planets fly
Up to thrones of space
Not a heart can face,
Lose or trace,

Into my dull sea
Plunges the soul of thee,
Phantom-wing of light,
To load a sea of night
Full of sight.

Gold finger of the sea
Point me eternity!
Show me but a day,
But a single ray
Not of clay;

I will follow on
When my day is gone;
I will find a way
By your single ray
Through the clay.

What a world is this
Where we slip amiss

With a million spheres
Flashing through our tears,
Frowns and fears!

How their ropes of light
Like ladders up the night
Bid me rise to rise
In heaven's lidless eyes,
Nightless skies!

In a single breath
Is the voice of death;
In a moment's run
Is a clouded sun
All undone;

But a breath of thee
Is of eternity;
Of some finer shore
Where life's longings soar
More and more.

Hide thyself in me,
Star of my infancy;
And when life drops low
In its ebb and flow,
Dark and glow,

Softly skimmer through
Evening's darkest dew;
Brush the tears away
In a dash of day,
Happy day!

ELMBANK

THIS river how quiet
As the overlording sky—
The river—how I stood by it
As boy here those wonder-days gone by
To get the bank-sweet and Swaar-apple dye,
A boy lost in the growing,
A boy still for not knowing
Soul stays while man is gone or going!

Each elm is in place,
Each one I knew by name,
Each bore a popular grace,
Unusual frame
Of self-sufficiency
With no deficiency
In roundabout elegant mien
Of its own unworldly swing and green.

By the river bank was a place to be going,
I to be reaping, August sowing
Wonders of heaven beyond all knowing.

She too was here then,
Gentlest Ellen Meriden;
Not a turn of any weather
But found us hand in hand, and whether
Things turned well or evil then,
There were we heart and heart together.

Twenty years now flown away,
And what now to say
Have twenty years to me this day
Save all around
In sky or ground
All is utterly the same
As then when only concord came
And we thought life just a gaining game.

By the mere chance, do you think,
We are together again,
Gentle Ellen and I as then,
Here once more by the Elmbank brink
Of this our Deerfoot river
Which leaps so, making misstep never,
We here by only chance,
Just haphazard circumstance
After so long ago
We parted in youth, came to know
World-bubbles how they snap and go?

Chance only, did you say,
Brought us here this day?
Clicks there the Law of atomic rock
Puts the atoms under lock,
Yet never Law for these hearts
Holds them back while life departs?
For here is aught worth thinking of:
A day is done, life is enough,
But who is there comes to an end of love?

Together we in this bank of elms—
Such August-hour overwhelms
With Aphrodite butterfly,
Scent of lily-laden sky,

Spiral eagles in the wind,
Blossoms to their fingers pinned—
And we talk over old times,
Catch the cattle-bells in chimes,
Cricket cricketing his rhymes.

We talk over old times,
Dear Ellen and I;
We talk of how spirit climbs
While men wilt and die;
How thought leaps beyond the ken
Or temple-place of men;
Soul in touch with what is beyond,
Death a day and way to unbond,

And I say: "You were young
In those young other days,
Lights in your eyes were hung,
Lutes were your lips for lays,
Each word galloped and sung
Till birds in the air sang praise
At the way you carolled among
The flowers in those days.

"The world goes by,
So many years
Leave signs of each sigh,
Signs of bleaching tears,
So you may not hide
The angles and arcs
And thought beside
With ruts for marks
Which I see in your cheek,
Which I know in your brow

Of volumes to speak
If the heart knew how.

“This world has its own way,
Gets the most out of youth,
Ambulant power, amputant truth,
Heart-laugh, dimple-play,
Symmetry in cheek and hand,
Beauty gifted to command,
Spirit gifted to equip—
Youth is king in the lip.

“How I remember
Our one September
In such long ago,
You the Princess of Youth, nor ember
Captured ever such keen glow
As you held in the brow and lip,
Just as you held my heart that day—
How could we think such years must slip,
We to go each by a separate way?

“This is the Elmbank brook,
Here just we parted then,
Nor word of you since, nor look
Save what I kept in ken
Of your last word, meant to last
’Though this life be overpast,
While now I see you as you were then,
My one flower in this Ulmus-glen,
Handsomest Ellen Meriden!

“But here is the world to say
You were young in that day;

Here is the world with its truth:
Man shall fasten to youth;
Age is a lip with a pout
Because life is blown out,
Life is a lip with an age
Like a thumb-dotted page,
So I must take kindly to youth
For the way and the truth.

"Am I to listen to this,
I must have such lips to kiss
As were yours that evergreen day
Your dimples made play,
Your heart kept in tune
Like a pinon-jay
In his lap of noon.

"Am I to love you now,
This is the world's receipt:
You shall be new in brow,
Hand and the eye complete,
Your face like a flower
Of such satin power
As I plucked for you in my garden-hour.

"All which is young and bright
Captures heart and soul;
Age is a touch of night,
Is a yellowing jole,
So the world says
And you mind what they say,
Mind their no and yes,
Mind their pigeon-play
At truth—this is a world to live in,

Never a world to 'but' or 'if' in,
Man meant only to knuckle and give in!

"Did you think just your love
Made purpose enough,
Could hide ruts, hide scars,
Hide the crow's-foot that mars,
Could count an atom, count aught
After life is an afterthought
And the two round eyes count only nought?

"Only the oldened face
Is left to you now;
That brooch looks out of place
As the smile, somehow,
With neither dot nor trace
Of the young bright brow,
Of that keen careless care
About the temples, girlhood hair
In frolic and tempestuous fair.

"So my wise world says!
What shall I do less
Than I follow on
Quite the way the world has gone,
Value you for the pink you leak
In the ear and cheek,
Wild side-looks of your young eyes
With their iris dyes,
Or your new sweet-rocket throat
At its bobolink note,
And I look, and you are no more there
As once, your young triumphant air
As once, so surpassing fair?

“My world has passed you by,
The world thunders on and on,
While for aught I try to spy
You are as good as gone
By lack of flame in the eye,
By want of plump in the lip—
Left to you now is only your sigh
That you let the sweet world slip.

“There ’s the way I must speak,
Do I think that way too,
Do I love chin and cheek,
Take the eye for its blue,
Hold to your holding hand
For more than tablet of sand,
Count red in the rounded lip
More than this Weigelia-slip
Dying soon as the east winds nip.

“Sweet in the rose is such
I may not see nor touch;
Life in the rose is what
Outleaps my leap of thought;
Beauty too is in place,
Keeps its hand and face
Of most masterful grace,
Yet Beauty is such
As I may not clutch
Nor taste of nor touch,
Nor carry about and apart
Save here in my heart.

“For here is your rose you gave,
One wild rose, the which you caught,

One rose leaning over its grave,
The one you pulled and brought
To hand to me that ox-eyed day
We parted—what different ways
We took, what blame or praise,
Bafflement, battle-days,
Yet here is my rose—see how
Only wrinkles make the brow,
Only a spoon of dust is now!

“Counts it the less to me
Now no pink is in sight,
Nor a shape to see
Nor a quaff of light,
All the smoothe lip gone
And the ruffled puff
Once I doted on
And counted enough
Just before I knew
There is more in sight
Than the corn-flower hue
Or the pink delight?

“If I may not forget
What this rose means to me,
Once with its carcanet
Of silver dew making free
With starlight, and now gone,
Now only dust to dote upon,
How more do I look to you,
True Ellen! Hearts are true
Right in spite of what time may do
To wither and thither me or you!

"Soul is a thing to outlast
Any future, every past;
Makes more of what is unseen
Than arm-angle, crocodile green;
Peeks high, forgets nothing
Worth while, worth worthing;
Values highest what is best
Over above the rosiest,
So clings to eternal Law
Of Beauty worth effort for,
Of which my love is part
And I find you so in my heart

"As you were then
In those young other days
In this grass-corner when
We parted our ways—
So much has been wrought,
So much is gone undone
Since this your rose you caught
At its bath in the sun!

"Count the wrinkles for aught?—
Count spots in the sun,
You remember them not
In such light, nor a spot
But is drowned in the run
Of such sheen, of such grace
Of warm light in the face

"As is yours—there I only see
Soul in you—what to me
Count wrinkles, plenitude-years
Making harvests of tears

To burn chinks in the cheek?—
They are lips meant to speak
Of heart which has grown
While fly-days have flown,
Of soul which largens the more
Wrinkles come to the fore,
While so I look only to you
That are lovemost, are true;
Other Beauty I see in you
Outglistens glistening eyes,
Spirit which is more than wise—
Love looks higher than the skies.

“The sea in the wind is tost,
The wind in the sea is lost—
Love goes and yet stays
Like the freshet of days,
As here once more we stand
By the brook-road, hand in hand
As one, as much one as ever,
Two for one and forever.”

PEACHAM PASTURE

I

You think it a soreful life?
Never that, my friend!
Value is in strife,
Life a means to an end
Where all is infinite,
So I see in it
Always a means to a means
Beyond any dance
Of circumstance,
As yonder mountain careens,
Over it the moonlight leans,
Over beyond the Dog Star greens.

II

Go I this way, that way,
And you think it nought
If I watch a chat play
In my apple plot,
Or I pull a Bellis
Out of the ground,
While truth to tell is
This truth I found:
Any one way to go,

Any small thing to do
 Shall count more than I know
 At last to me or to you,
 Seeing each means to an end,
 And I see no end at all,
 And the great on the small depend,
 So I see this truth—there is no small.

III

This for the nature of things,
 Nature's nature—so
 I see how order clings
 To order, and if or no
 My world seem to go wrong,
 If I have lost my friend,
 If opposing force be strong,
 If chaos look like the end,
 For this truth comes to my call:
 If I suspect I see
 Disorder in sublimity,
 I know I do not see at all.

IV

Did you think blundering chance
 Took a hand in the game
 Of infinite circumstance
 Which poises flame
 In the zenith ether,
 Puts always a star
 Beyond a star,
 Man the sun-born breather
 Of Heaven to sleep, to dream,
 To wake to one day find

Things are soulfuller than they seem,
Man is vaster than he divined?

V

For now I lean at her gate—
See how the truth holds true
There 's neither small nor great
Outside the soul in you—
Now the night hour is late,
One star poses, points
Where I so lean at her gate
Just as the moon anoints
The waves in her bronzen hair—
Thus the night is on
And the world is gone,
Yet I and my Philomel are there.

VI

She takes me so to task
For the one thing I ask,
Her heart, her all there is
Of soul's stupendous mysteries
Of unworldly thought:
I 'm too cold, she thinks,
I make my way by force
Of knowledgeable kinks,
While so, for matter of course,
I play my understudy part,
I make love by rules of art,
I lack genius of the heart!

VII

And this because I keep
My heart so out of sight

She thinks there 's nought to reap
 In me save my love of Right,
 As if a man may show
 His heart as a nickel flips,
 And there the consuming glow
 Burns the words on his lips!

VIII

So I have to say not much;
 I waste my soul in sighs;
 The wide moon adds not a touch
 Of Heaven to her widened eyes
 As plump in the pasture is seen
 My rival—he comes our way,
 As plain it is he has been
 To hunt the plover, to slay
 The cyprus-bird in his song,
 Pick his throat out, make play
 Of slaughter, nor he counts the wrong.

IX

Comes the straight man so proud
 As a militant chief,
 Boasts his crack shot, is loud
 In his pompous belief
 He can kill at first sight
 By his magic of might;
 Boasts he took him on the wing
 In between his ballading;
 Then turns to my Philomel
 As if to his one matross,
 Harkens for the tenor-bell
 Could ring in her applause,

Peacham Pasture

Looks for delight to rise
To dance to pieces in her eyes.

X

Is he not whittled in limb
Fine as a fawn could be,
The strong clean eye in him,
Head up in supremacy
Of tall carriage, popular power,
Fortune sticking to his hour,
And what will she do,
Will she praise him so high
For the shot he threw,
For the sigh he drew
From singing lintie about to die?

XI

He so tall and so fine
As a star will shine;
I otherwise, never made
To conquer by big brigade
Of circumstantial dash,
My heart cornered in my sash,
So he will take her eye,
And then he will take her soul,
While I am left to my sigh,
I play subordinate rôle
Because I have only to say,
In my undervalued way,
"I could not kill the beautiful bird
Fine as Heaven, for Heaven is heard
Again and again in his bugle-word.

XII

"Little pretty amber bird
 In his violet fire,
 Nevermore shall he be heard
 To lead his April choir
 Of a soft morning—he hangs
 Pinned in the huntsman's belt,
 Past and gone are his pangs,
 Gone the one frenzy he felt
 Once he straightened and knelt
 To give me his magic note
 All the world could never quote—
 Now not a breath in store,
 Opal feathers to drop his gore,
 And the pith of sweetness is no more."

XIII

Right as I say this much
 She drops his cardinal quamoclit
 He gave her, as if the touch
 Smuggled blood and death in it;
 Drops her brow, avoids his look
 As if it wore the huntsman's hook,
 Turns to me, gives me her eyes
 With their new wonderful surprise
 Like blue looks out of exalted skies—
 Now we both understand,
 She comes my way, takes my hand,
 Gives me her one look so true
 To say: I now see clearly too,
 I now see you through and through,
 For now I see your heart in you.

XIV

Just a little bird,
Half a tiny word
And the thing is done:
Cruelty is on the run,
I have captured her heart—
So the jewel-flower is won
To cling and finger in the sun
Just by my mastersport
Of soulfulness with not an art,
To show, as I say, above all
'Round about the worlds I see
Is only magnanimity,
Is one vast truth—there is no small.

EWIGZEITGEIST

I

SUMMER is up and gone,
Toughened Fall is on,
Yet what care I?—I know truth,
Fall is another kind of youth;
Fields will be snow-blown soon,
Winds white-eyed—I know the festoon
Of dead muscatel, what it means
By the way it looks and leans
Blown out—so likewise I know
Naked branches of the trees
Are the bones of summer—so
I know this cold whistling breeze
Teaches the dead leaves to sneeze
In the underbrush—what care I,
Seeing I know my own truth,
Life is one perfect way to die,
So death means more than life, than I,
So Fall is another kind of youth.

What soul goes gifted to forget
Swinging box of mignonette,
Swinging wind in the blind
Of his boy-home he put behind?
Do I forget how it was,
How my towhee would pue

In between hawks and daws?
Is my young life performed, perdue?
For look, I am back here now,
Look how I know this place
Of the overlording brow
Of Lantern Hill, crow-flocks in chase
Of breath-weather, this morning to make
Bees whistle, corn-tassels shake,
And I am back at it and so full
As once I was here as boy,
Overloaded with country joy—
But now I have too this sore
To think such days will come no more,
The while I 'm full as then I was
Of joy to watch the eagle pause
In his spotted heaven—yet I
Wear more soul than as boy before,
For now I draw my down-deep sigh
Thinking those days will come no more.

As boy I stood so satisfied
If a day came, if a day died,
So my half-heart never sighed.
Now I have such wonderful past
To look to, I look aghast
To find what trinkets I saw
Worth while, worth my weeping for,
Grown small as capers of a mouse,
My guinea-grass, jumble-bird house
Or what not, as I saw things then
Leap wider than the eyes of men,
And I have been man so long,
Counted my gains among men,
Considered me wise and strong,

Planted in my meridian,
Yet now am I forced to confess
Life is neither more nor less
To me than that day it was
I stopped to watch the eagle pause—
This difference just: I as the boy

Wearied lastly of each toy,
So I shouted to be man,
To make my way terranean
To outrival men, to tower,
Example unexampled power,
While now as man I would be back
At my nimble finger-knack
Of so untwisting a flower
As to make the most of it,
Never to think of my power,
Nor ever once to boast of it
How I the child in the field
Sat cuddled, while people came
To kneel to me and to yield,
To join me in my sun-god game,
Go my way, yet knew not my name,
Enough for them that they knew
I was sun-laurelled—warm and true.

Longed I as boy to be man;
As man I long to be boy;
There 's this life at a span,
There 's this world for a toy
I play at, the while I grow
More than congressments can show,
For am I not vaster than the life
I so completely surpass

Ewigzeitgeist

By my strong love of strife,
 Of the back teeth which it has
 To grind me shaplier? Lo,
 See how I come and I go
 Back and forth, how as man
 I would be the boy again,
 How as boy I leap to plan
 To fly to man's meridian—
 Back and forth so—there I shuttle
 Like the bee-fly in a bottle,
 To know, as the fly knows too,
 There 's the outside mightier view
 Of universes, captures us two.

If both ends of life answer so small
 Once I come to question it all,
 The while I am here to know
 How, whether I go back to youth,
 Or youth to complete stature grow,
 I knock about between youth and man
 To find I hold the larger span,
 Am wider than the thing I see,
 I mingle with eternity
 To know of this: I am what
 I seize at, there can be nought
 Without me is worth the thought,
 Since, whatever shape I cake it,
 My life is the thing I make it
 To the dot's dottle—so I have this
 For extract, as my meaning is:
 I countenance my supreming soul,
 I outkingdom the reigning whole
 Of grig-life of hop and pelf,
 So I know I 'm the thing itself.

II

Ellen Belle Amber to-day,
Beautiful Belle Ellen's way,
Carols her thought like a robin's lay
And I am waiting—I hark for her—
So I hark if the roses stir,
I take their steps for the steps of her.

She is—could it matter where,
So she drinks the maple air
And her plentiful heart is everywhere?
I am wondering to know what a place
The world would be without her face
Of such unworldly wonderful grace.

Down in his cajuput tree
Larks the lark so loftily,
His heart in touch with the heart in me,
I know his lip of song to be one
With spirit, for the note will run
After his lip is untuned, is done,

For comes the fine song in me
As it came out of his tree
To mould each wind into melody
And I am here, or I may be there,
And he has never a lip to spare,
While the song he sang is everywhere.

Counts he more than part of me,
Once I gather up his glee
So he is all I may hear or see?
There he clings like the primrose in bole,
Yet through us both gallops unique soul,
While what am I save the galloping whole?

So my Belle Ellen is so
 I have her, careless if I go
 Or come, for here is a thing I know:
 Each ripe morning I hark for her
 In where the leaves of roses stir
 To know their lips are the lips of her,

As I know soul is about
 In any tulip-joint or pout,
 Yet past catching, past finding out,
 So then I know the elfin is such
 As puts the disjointed world in touch,
 Never companion like it such.

I am the snow-peak that shines,
 Am the tuft of jacobines;
 I the one spirit which divines
 Crocodile green in a curlew's eye,
 Passwords if the tall winds sigh—
 What then are they unless I am I?

More's in the twitch of a wink
 Than I brood at or you think
 Who overlook the interlink
 One atom is—will you doubt it,
 Knowing the songs of starlings shout it,
 Great Cosmos could not inch without it?

Goes and comes this soul in man
 As in any ortolan
 Mooning in sky Elysian
 To try to outgeneral worlds, to dot
 The heavens like one triumphant spot
 Of Beauty never to be forgot.

I hark for my rose again,
Which dangles in bush and rain,
To get the meaning—I get it plain,
This: Just a whisper, one tiny stir
The lip makes, and I cannot err,
I know it for the whisper of her,

My Belle Ellen—so she stays
As the undiminished days,
Carols her thought like the robin's lays
Out of all soul, so truly I see,
Which way soever the flesh may flee,
She is my very soul in me.

THE INDICTMENT

I

Down underground,
 So too overhead,
I 've the teeth of a hound,
 I 've the blue of the dead
And the cold as well,
 I 've the humor of Hell
To cudgel and slay,
 I 've the dog in me
Of deformity,
 The dog and to have his day.

II

Red hands—blood red,
 For so it is
The blood of the dead,
 And the crime is his
And the hands are mine,
 And the fault is his
And the knife and spine
 And butchery are mine and mine.

III

Up to the peak
 Of ugly thought

The Indictment

1211

I glutton my freak,
 I daub my blot
Of blood in the cheek
 Of her girleen grace—
So runs the streak
 Down her handsome face—
In under the hair
 The eyes are there
At their glassen stare—

IV

So runs the cripple,
 The demon in me,
Shoulders put triple,
 Put niggardly,
As, lo, my nowl
 To the breast is bent
Just as my soul
 Is pinched and pent,
Pity as thin
 As the spider's heart
And his poison fin
 And his butcher's art.

V

My rival he,
 Mastrous straight
As majesty
 And smoothe as plate,
Polish to new
 His lively look,
Hair under glue,
 Collar to cook

The Indictment

So the end in view
 Be the end of you
 In a match of pleats
 And ribbon feats.

VI

He has his day
 Of love with her,
 And I must delay,
 I must not stir,
 But watch him take
 His cup of bliss,
 Behold him slake
 His thirst and kiss
 Her mouth and eyes
 And pigeonwise
 His love display
 Each day to day
 To make her his prize
 His champion way.

VII

The cripple I,
 By way of birth,
 Of my quarried eye,
 Of my crooked girth,
 I could never say
 "I love you too,
 I 've the dimple-play,
 Apollo-thew,
 I 've the iris guise,
 So give me your eyes
 For my picture-book
 And my hungry look"—

The Indictment

1213

For so I should see
 My look in there
Of the hungry stare
 Of deformity.

VIII

Like as the thought
 In me is so small
As to question not
 But the girl is all
My world to be got,
 And whether or not
The kit I stew in
 Shall run me to ruin,
So my heart is past
 In a single hour
As the single flower
 In a winter blast,
While all I see
 In my drunken whirl,
For the life of me,
 Is my prize—the girl!

IX

There stands the Law
 Which made me so
Of porbeagle jaw,
 Quohog toe:
I get the thing
 From broods of men
In the years before
 All reckoning;
Spring-time then

The Indictment

Of a world to grow,
A beginning when
Men thought to go
This way askew,
That way awry,
To crush what is true,
To hate what is high,

X

So only sent
Their soul askew
From prosperment,
From trueness too;
Cultured what look
The pit-viper has,
Took his oily crook,
His nasty mass,
And just by the Law
Of progeny
Handed their cloven claw
To me,
Handed their spilth
Of villainy,
Vileness and filth
To me.

XI

This is the cellar-pit,
This where she died,
I here to tell of it,
Tell how I lied
By my trashy note,
Tell how I tied

My thumbs in her throat:
 If I may not have her,
 So shall not he
 By his puff-palaver,
 His eaglery,
 His elegant pate
 Of Roman speech,
 All out of reach
 Of my muzzled gait.

XII

My thumbs in her throat,
 My teeth in her face,
 How I tore and I smote
 The blood from its place
 On the pillow of thought,
 Her thought of him
 In his lucky lot,
 In his fawnish limb—
 Her teeth I sowed
 In the cellar air
 Till the dark pit glowed,
 Mocked at her stare,
 Fingered and toed
 In her blood and hair—

XIII

“Take that,” said I,
 “Take that and that,
 Learn you to die
 As the hounded rat,
 Learn you that I
 Am the hornèd bat

The Indictment

To stifle, to kill,
 To full fulfill
The beast in me,
 My savagery,
My dragon spell,
 Learn you to see
The fire in me
 Of all blazing Hell!"

XIV

Now you may have her,
 You of the pipe
Of handsome palaver,
 Handsomer stripe—
Have her so now,
 Take her to keep
Of the broken brow
 And mended sleep;
She will not waver
 Between us two,
So you shall have her
 The eons through—
Here 's luck to you
 And your pretty bride
Whose look is new
 As the eyes are wide
And all for you,
 All the death inside!

XV

But you of the past,
 Yours be the fault

Who gave me my ghast
 Of heinous halt!
 You drove your soul
 Awry, askew,
 Then gave me the whole
 Hell-hound in you
 For a legacy
 Of supremacy
 Of putrid thought,
 Of monsterly blot
 On my blasted lot!

XVI

Your way you took,
 Never thought of me
 In my ugly crook
 Of deformity
 To come after you
 By the straight descent,
 By the Law of true
 Equivalent:
 Be you your worst
 And the thing is curst;
 Be you your best
 And the thing is blest;
 Anyway strike,
 To weather, to lee,
 Like begets like
 Eternally.

XVII

And the pith of it all
 That I am so small

The Indictment

As the soul in you
 From which I grew
To a cloven claw
 Just to ripen for
Murder by beast of heart
 To hate, to play my part
Of vulture, crocodile art—
 And this her grave
In the cellar air,
 I the plain knave
To put her there
 For my devil's whim
And my withered limb—
 And I so small
Because you were so small,
 And, oh, the pity of it all!

BATTLE

To horse and to arms,
To the gallop of feet,
Hail to destruction of calms,
Make you the killing of men complete—
Wild-eyed dreaming to spill
Blood—what a genius to kill!—
To arms and to horse,
Snaffle to snap the teeth of remorse,
Sprinkle the planet with teeth,
Never brother be left to breathe—
To the banner in blue,
To the hornet in you
To right about face
By level quick,
Make a landing-place
For your killing-pick—
On to the thickets
Of men, to the pickets
Of men, of snivelling slaves
Drinking health in their graves—
On to the clinch and they come
To the lash of a drum
To the spot, to Hell for a spot
To bury all human-hearted thought—
Now to the shoulder to draw
Sword against great compassion-law

And they spit to strike,
Hand to hand,
Send the marlin-spike
Through lung and gland
The way the dead will understand—
Fast to your clinch
In a brother's throat
Nor he yield an inch
Till you spill his note
As never tornado tore and smote—
Pick in the eyes,
Gouge greatness out,
Blacken his skies
Of noble doubt
To make your feast of snarl and flout—
Champion General, let him swing
His axe, never shrug at the thing
So his great glory pipe and ring—
Pull at your mounted clarion,
Pump the tunes out of pipes,
Urge the devil in them on
For love of stars and stripes,
Love of the stripes they feel,
Love of the stars they see
If you fetch them a wipe of your steel
By the powers that be—
For love of Cathedral God
There leaps the field ablaze,
Leaps the hungry sun in their blood—
Short the breath of their days
Now they tumble to scud
To skirt the field of your bullet-flood
For fingers to spare,
Junkets of skulls

To crowd the air
Like navies of gulls,
Ankles and gullets to fly
To shock all ample quiet sky
To watch them swink and sink and die,
And the thing is done

And your freedom won—
What count brothers dead and gone?
Pale looks the moon aloft,
Pale as they lie in the sand
In the mix of her amber flood
And they lie in their blanket of blood,
Tenants of crop and croft
To put out each wilted hand
To motion farewell
To you Hounds of Hell,
Farewell to their pleasant land—
No more for them the sun and the sand!

This to be Christian,
This to be kind,
Such be your mission
Of heart and mind
To put your love of love behind,
And you shall live to croon and boast
You parted Body and God and Ghost.

Here is battle—you may have it
For the sumptuous glory of it
To make way and make great,
Make good your pompous bulls of state
By all that is last and least in you,
Hell and the wolf-wild beast in you!

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I

SUCH a southernish afternoon,
 I in West Meadow Road,
The road in show-shalloon
 Of thistles tilted à la mode,
I of a mind to go
 Where goes the road, any way so
I come to time to unlink
 From labor—my day to think,
To unpocket, unmask,
 Catch a brook by the brink,
A suckerel at his task
 Of poisoning to bowl or bask
In his pumping river,
 Shooting like a fretted sliver,
His life one delightful quiver.

II

I take to the road;
 I rather not know which way it goes;
Behind me I leave my load
 Of thought—this south wind blows
At nothing more than to peel
 My care off so I clip and reel
As the wind does, this way or that,
 To swamp a flower, float a chat,

Pull my breath in, let it go
 Just to let Creation know
 Breath may come, breath may go,
 But soul is come to stay, while so
 I am off to the river-arc
 Which paddles between sun and park
 To get the leap of counterspark.

III

What my thought is who shall say?
 Thought that life is to-day
 To unearth unusual surprise
 To custom my widening eyes
 To see where uncounted planets play
 More than comes of being wise
 Or knowledgeable man,
 Knowledge to trick and pick and plan;
 Thought that I am meant to poke
 My neck in no kind of yoke,
 But go untanglefooted free
 To my complete supremacy.

IV

One God-bird at his fytte
 And I listen for it
 In this frescade of a tree,
 He head over head in glee
 To shout his soul out so for me
 And I listen—just ahead
 Another quality of note
 So much finer is trumpeted
 That never lip could quote

To Whom It May Concern

The unimpeachable sound
Tap to tap, as if the ground
Dropped whispers which were heavenward-bound,
But my way drifting, till I knew
I was heavenward-drifted too.

V

For now in the road before
Comes such a maiden to see
A man could not look for more
Of Beauty in the galaxy
Of uncomputed skies,
Such unworldish worthfulness
Planted in such violet eyes
The capital sky looks nothingness
Matched with such human prize
As holds me to look so straight,
The while she comes my way,
There 's but to love and contemplate,
There 's not to do, to say.

VI

Spirits talk—be sure of that—
For, now she is passing by,
There 's one thing we level at,
Thought in the talking eye,
As she so looks to me
Out of such eyelash light,
By Heaven there 's Heaven to see
Just there in her leap of sight
As now she catches my look,
Reads the volume, drops the book

Right as such longing flies
 To longing between our eyes,
 And so she passes on,
 And so my Heaven is come and gone.

VII

Did you think that about all
 Soul with wings could do,
 Fly to your beck and call
 Of worded lip, picture tattoo,
 While never an answer to what
 Lies behind this master-thought
 That I am to play my part
 Of lording and unlording heart
 Beyond the atoms to go
 As thought is high, Earth is low?

VIII

Sweet Lady, take this to your thinking
 If you be thinking of me:
 Stars go blinking-winking
 Their light of eternity;
 Sky to sky is buttoned so
 One sky spreads what sheet of glow
 Will fail us never, never go;
 Heaven to Heaven was buttoned so
 This day I saw you come and go
 I know the deepness of it plies
 Higher and lastinger than skies.

IX

Thought is ample, place is wide,
 Worlds go spinning beyond end;

To Whom It May Concern

Has my friend, as you see it, died,
Yet am I to have my friend,
For friendship is a thing to endure,
Else could there be no friendship sure
Of being—love will depend
On endlessness—do I lose my friend,
Then counts love nothing in the end,
While, look you through the romping air,
There 's no "nothing" anywhere.

X

Who shall know what is begun
In one day under the sun?
There was your faithful face,
I under my lone tree,
Yet not all time and place
Shall steal your one look from me,
Go where you will, who e'er you be.
Read this you may on a time,
My rough-ended tilt of rhyme,
To know me somehow, some yet—
Who is there ever may forget?
Come when you will or where
To find me, sure as April air
Waits the blossom I 'll be there
Waiting and waiting everywhere!

TWO NOTES OF A THRUSH

DRAW up the shade, dear,
Night is pale as death;
This red born morn hath drawn a breath
Across my meadows in the clear,
For life is near.

Hearken to the thrush;
His note is low, lisps
Like autumn winds in naked wisps,
To second the mill-wheel's muffled gush
Which whispers "hush!"

No breath of a sound;
The doctor came and went
As one whose will must not relent
'Though not a thread of hope be wound
Above the ground.

Mute all night he lay,
As deaf to every word
As if new other lips were heard;
Some matchless echo of a lay
Far deeps away.

How his faithful locks
Like ivies cling to creep
About the temple of his sleep
At which the grum centurion knocks,
Spits and mocks.

Two Notes of a Thrush

Lift his talking doll;
She does not look nor speak
Sorrows of the wise and weak;
It may be he will hear her call
Above us all.

How his life is fled
With a handful of days,
As all his steps and plays
Broke but one willowed path which led
Among the dead!

In his small hour here
He never knew of death:
His was one gentlest morning breath
Across my meadows in the clear,
For life was near.

Would we too had kept
The true fine simple way
Which bears apart from drowsy clay
To where such feet as his have stept
While worlds have slept.

Soon shall we be free
To take our journey too,
One hard long way in search of you—
How many wandering worlds ere we
May come to thee!

Soft, he wakes in sleep;
Oh, see his closing eyes
Like yon last stars in morning skies
That sink away, yet watches keep
Beyond the deep!

Two Notes of a Thrush

1229

There, don't sorrow, dear,
But hearken to the thrush;
He swings his new note from the bush,
His song of promise wild and clear,
For death is near.

TO MY FOREFATHERS

I

NEVER were ye forgot,
Not in the romp of unbridled time
Which trod you under foot and under ground!
Be my way this or that,
My luck forward or backward bent,
Days of bold brilliant fashion,
Or blunted as winter math,
Comes there this value to mark my thought,
That, be the route what it may,
Fat option or lean and hungry lot,
Ye never were forgot.

II

The raw globe for all it is
Prowls about vaulted precipice
Of fostrous skies, where not
One atom goes begging for life,
Where nothing is forgot.
Ye are to me myself,
Ye of whom I am come,
Sinew and thought and elf,
That I be not sunken dumb
Where I stop to think of you
In this sombre evening view,

To My Forefathers

1231

This here where the field flowers brought
Charm to you and peace of thought,
Flowers I pull in the dusk for you,
Rocket and forget-me-not,
Which I lay here where you sleep
Tucked in such wondrous dumb and deep.

III

Plow and corn-house hang about
In dalmatics of red rust;
Wait they their day to follow you
To your empire of dust and dew.
I make them my friends, and then
I take them all thought to heart
For the time when you too were men,
So played your live unlorded part.

IV

Inseparable, you and I;
Make we not one in the main?
I wear your shape of hand; your eye
Saw as I see what great domain
Lies outside the tread of rain
And prop of surprising grass
To welcome you, to welcome me
To what I look to fathom to be,
Part of entire reality,
Part of unlimitable thought
To know ye never were forgot.

V

You held the plow, I hold the helm
The way the poplar points, while yet

To My Forefathers

I have your watermill, your elm,
That never I may forget
What virtue put you in arms,
What rightness you played your ways
For that love of it which charms
Beyond this one mouthful of days,
Till I am come to unlearn
What I of myself may be,
And so I look to you—I turn
Back to your supremacy
Of pluck in the open field,
Of such honest fearless conceit
As gave you your harvest yield
Of soul with an aim in view,
Of life in the flower and sweet,
Of purpose to do bold and true,
All the best and most of you—
While just to think of it that we
Come heir to your divinity!

VI

Humble moons in the south zenith
Go buried out of my sight;
'T is not that they are not there,
'Though buried so far under foot,
For I see through this muck and soot
As through the overhanging air,
Till, lo, I am headlong driven
To know my moons lie buried in Heaven!

VII

I do not hear the shadows,
Nor see I the upheaving air

To My Forefathers

1233

Which washes down the meadows—
Dance they less verily there?
In among unsaid graves
Clings the ivy and scatters
As any pond by its waves—
What lose I of life which matters,
So Beauty be the thing in keep
Links worlds to worlds, deep on deep?
I know ye were all of what
Gave me soul at heart and thought,
Ye who look to have passed away—
So any night darks any day;
Yet any darkness matters not,
Since never were ye once forgot.

VIII

I play about your field by night;
Your rake and flail I hold straight up
To let the moon so slope its light
'T will cut your name across the cup
Of meadow where now I stand
—Rake and flail are both in hand—
And think of you, think of what
Any life may be, so wrought
Of honest rough-and-tumble lot,
Till goes my whisper which will pass
Down to you through the whispering grass:
Ye never never were forgot.

SAVIGNY AND SELTZERELLA

A SKIT

SAVIGNY

DRUNK! So drunk, and I know it!
My back balk and fetch-up show it!
What for a pitch of a street
To pick quarrels with peaceful feet!
Two moons overhead stand witness
To yonder double-sighted fitness
Of Heaven to my brace of eyes—
I know I am twice as wise
As that gawk who sees only one—
He sees rubbish in the sun!

Full? Full as a tea-bottle at a bar!
Now, by pittiness, what we are,
We men of manners! I say, gay chump,
Your arm for steadiness while I stump
To shake hands with yonder cordial pump!
Your boots! Fetch them the ankle-kick!
They look learnèd, talk thick,
Lag like a black lackey behind,
Or they pitch horns of the bull, bull-blind.
More to wind'ard—what say?
Never I heard you speak
More than caterpillars leak

In the dry leaf—you look glum
As any tank of odium!
Your arm, just for the link,
Your useful phase! Never you think,
Or you may slip your quarter-deck,
Spew and pitch and break your neck!

Come, fuss up a bit!
As the gunwale I am straight,
I handsome, you proud of it
That you masquerade as mate
And my boon companion! Hic,
But your snobbism turns me sick!
Snaps to the pleb-irrision,
I 'm for coequal division
'Twixt cits—I 'll divide with you
What I know, you to do
Likewise by me, by which way so
You shall have the half I know
To peacock at market-show,
In exchange for which in turn
You shall make it your concern
To show me how your two wits churn:
Look—say me your honest say,
Is that the moon overhead,
Or is it the sun—then will I lay
Wager I can honestly say
If it be night, or be only day.

Seltzerella! There 's the girl
To pin lustre to an earl!
You rival me for her!
I know you for conqueror

Of women, know your way
 You lord it, turn popinjay,
Unhook their haughtiness, bring them to you
 As I untwist the lily!—All true—
But not this day, my quiet covey,
 For by the Lord Mayor you are drunk
As an overloaded monk,
 And not I—there flop your boots
Wallowy as wanton brutes
 In a circle, curve complete;
You cut conics in the street,
 Mathematics in your feet
As you suppose, the while who knows
 But figures are figures to disclose
What wisdom dances in your toes!

So 't is settled—you are drunk!
 Never tree-top in a wind
Reeled so, was so unpinned
 From the solid under-trunk.
Your luck that I am clear
 As noon-light, am proper near
For an eye of concern to you
 In your drunken sunken stew.

Ship ahull, helm lashed alee
 Are you, as you lean to me,
But—look alive—Heaven's green geese
 But here she is, Seltzerella,
Both lips to this gallant breeze,
 Both hands full of new mitella
She brings to one of us—to which?
 Never to you as you reel and pitch!
Her flowers she brings to me—I 'm straight
 As fashion, nor I hesitate

To put feet forward like a man,
Which is fathoms more than
You by your bungle-boots could do—
How my fright fetches me to,
I myself again! As for you,
My word she will pass you by
For the evidence that I
Go gifted to walk, while you
Pitch and fetch like a wanderoo.

Seltzerella! This all-eyed day
May not match what plum, what gray
Mix in your look of thought
I puzzle at—condemn me not
That I with my friend am found,
He that drunken and unsound
As whips the wind—truth to tell,
I have him in tow, halt or jump,
To present him to our pump,
Little thinking I should meet
The field-flower—your pardon, sweet,
But my excuses for my friend,
Over-tempted to unbend
To the rhyton, nor recked the cost,
As now his head, not his heart, is lost.

He thinks me outclassed, drunken,
So his width of view is shrunken,
As sees a man in his grimes
More than truth is twenty times.
Your arm, Seltzerella,—so!
Leave him to his dreaming—go
My way—I straight my walk,

Savigny and Seltzerella

Like the song-swallow runs my talk—
Leave him to his pitch and balk!

SELTZERELLA

Why so!—but I do not see him,
Your friend you prattle so!
'Though you keep him or flee him
As you will, truth is I know
He stands not there!—I comprehend:
You are your own drunken friend,
Talking tatterwallopy,
Walking pat or scallopy;
You are your queasy friend, while not
Another hangs about this spot
You talk to—there your fright
On seeing me so put you right,
Never I could have known but you
Stood poised, fit as usual too,
When so you begun to jibe
Your friend, deal him diatribe,
Right there you tattled what you are,
Doublesome, multocular,
Yet the merest minimus,
Laughing loafing blunderbuss,
Such your mix of bob and fuss
And nothing, let me say to you
“Your health and my good day to you!”

PRIESTLINESS

HAIL to his toes
As he goes
His own way
And you follow,
You swallow
All he has to say,
You pinch at it,
Flinch at it,
Wheedle and pray,
He pastor and master who owns his own way.

[I thought God is one part of me,
Thought I I 'm part of infinity
Of what is, of what is beyond to be.]

Heel to him,
Kneel to him,
Copy the smirk
He coils in his cheek,
Learn of his quirk
That you shall be meek
To be mouthy
Yet drouthy
Of thought and weak,
Stoop to thumb under,

Pale at his thunder
Of wind in a mist,
Lean on his blunder,
Hark to his hist.

[But thought I this: I 'm meant to be
All by my being which I may see
To ripen to compass consummatry.]

Duck to his look,
There 's the truth
In his book,
There 's the tooth
Full of grit,
Full of poison to spit
And you will submit
To his will,
You will bow down
To his frown
To fulfil
The least wish
Of his devilish
Will.

[But I—am I to mump or trim,
Uncaptain, take the lash of his whim,
Take my view of God through the eyes of him?]

Meddlesome
Peddlesome
Priest at his tricks
Of cassock
And hassock,
Of candlesticks,
So you will unhinge

Till the end be what
But thralldom of thought,
Shrinking to cringe
So God will delight
At your booby fright,
At your spirit blight?

[Thought I God is such power in me
As ripe toward taller sublimity
Than master and slave—there 's the God in me!]

Cowls and capes,
Petrine ground,
Little bugle-shapes
Of sound
'Round an altar wave,
'Round the very nave,
While you mumble there
'Twixt the wheeling air,
Flabbergullion, flabbergasted slave.

[I thought I am the man to be
More than cackles nonentity
Up from the Hell of their Holy See.]

Let God be God,
But I am I
That fear no rod,
Craving no sky
Save to make my way
By force of what
Truth has to say,
Nor I heed the trot
Of their roundelay
Of blight and rot,

And I wear my pout,
And I hug my doubt,
And there goes no God shall hound me out.

[Thought I men are meant for the race,
To mantle somewhat, to grow apace
Above Priest and his cormorant growl of grace.]

What a sweet girl
In her place,
What a pearl
Of a face
On the white wasted hand
Which we understand
Is in death—
How the breath
Nor reasoneth
Nor tolls a prayer,
And he laid her there
By his double cut
At her soul—he shut
Her will in his fist,
He ground it to grist,
So now
By her unexampled brow,
As only such loveliness knows how,
She makes him her final obedient bow.

[Thought I God is the power that seeks
Onwardness, as any lily leaks
Oranged whitedness between the cheeks.]

Comes a day
And a way

To make right;
He will pay
For the sway
Of his might,
For the play
Of his blight;
There 's power
In the kink
Of a flower,
In the wink
Of a shower;
She shall grow
To be more
Than the heart
Had in store
From the start,
While what of his puff-above, Paulish art?

[Thought I God is the power in me
Will break chains, snap the curb in three
To make yet another God of me.]

Snarl and bend
To the end
To unbrave,
Play slave;
Cock an ear
To the pitch
In his sneer,
Get a twitch
To your fear;
Pray prayers,
Altar stairs
For your knees,

God to appease
And to please
By the shrimp
In your limp,
By the slouch
In your pouch—
While yet,
Do you not forget,
Man is to be
As the plan
And the span
Of the sea
To unfold
Into yellow,
Unmould
Into mellow
Feathers of gold,
To make brave
As the wave
Is to climb
Through slush-heap or rime
To match the stars by the blink sublime.

[God in his Heaven, I in mine
Unlorded, nor counts the countersign,
I my own God—there 's the reach divine.]

NOT ALL IS GOLD

PLUCK the apple
Out of her hat
Of the orange cheek
 And dapple,
 And that
Phœbe feather, climax peak
Of rachis, untwist what bow
Glossens at her throat, and lo,
You do not like her unrichened so?

Pull the ruffle
Out of her cape
Of quality red,
 Of shuffle
 And shape
Of fashion, but there instead
Fasten untaught calico,
Let the terry velvet go—
Never you liked her the plain way so?

Rub that polish
Out of her belt
Of bronze at her waist;
 Demolish
 What gelt
Of satin, enamel paste
Sprinkles at her neck such glow

As the constellations throw—
You will not have her becrippled so?

Yours was one view
Behind her hat
For the diamond there
 In her blue
 Cravat
In buckles of velvet hair,
Nor you saw one wonderful thing,
Fashion outside your reckoning,
Spirit behind any flounce of wing.

How fault goes out,
Each lie is lost,
So I come again
 To my doubt
 And cost
Of truth, till I get it plain:
She stood beyond your knowing,
You so blinded by her glowing
You took the gait her flounce was going.

Again she 's here,
The sweet same girl
Of a lip so red,
 Claim so clear,
 Such pearl
Each whisper she dreamed or pled,
But now not a pearl in sight—
Calico, poverty blight,
Yet the same modest great heart in sight

I saw that day
 You put her by
 For her lack of lace,
 Of display
 Of tie
 Of gold of abounding grace!
 Now she comes to look to me
 If I may look so I may see
 Sparkle in her of divinity.

She comes my way!
 This is her hour
 Of meekness of heart
 To display
 Her power
 Of selflessness, act her part
 Of plain appearance to show
 She is more than papilio
 Dancing to die in his candle-glow.

I see so deep
 Into her eyes
 By my gift of sight
 That I keep
 My prize
 For only the other light
 Of soul in her eyes I see,
 Other worlds of life to be,
 And she the life of the world to me.

BY MOONRISE

I

If I have a thought
After the pleasant day is over,
After the sun is under cover,
And I approach the kind of nought
Which sleep is—if I have a thought
That just because I sleep I know
There 's nothing of me, while so
I am nothing, I am not—
If I capture this one thought,
Comes another close in back:
This thinking is only one knack
Soul has, scarce more, I would think,
Than is chopped in a spirit's wink—
For look, what thought that man had,
My neighbor, who now is dead,
Is now my thought—he passes on,
Never his thought he hung upon,
Which now is mine—he is gone,
But who knows how far away,
While here is point for thinking on:
He left his thought with me that day
He turned so and went his way,
Quit his plucky diaphragm-play,
Gave up the good and the bad,
All he knew of, all he had

To me, so I have his thought
Like as I have his polyglot
Of symbols—yet was there cause
Made him what he is, what he was,
So you would not say his thought
Foundered in that potato lot
More than it floated from there,
Seeing he left his thought to me
To friend me every how or where,
And seeing what I see too,
I am higher than my thew
Or polo-leap—I see through
This thinking—there 's the elf,
My being, my boundless self—
There 's the surprising whole,
There 's the superabounding soul!

II

Did he wander forth, my friend,
Or come to the abrupt end
I fancy I see because
He is no more what he was,
Wears not now the flower-blue
Round eye he wore for peeking through
To see only elbow-measurement,
Half his seeing prison-pent,
While theres so my spirit sees
To cut through bold eternities—
How, think you, could I see
Without eternity in me?

III

Little lyrie in his brook,
How I wonder what he dreams,
He so small as never to look
Where his water-carriage streams,
He so small as not to see
Ocean yonder, how the gulp
Would mash him to sorry pulp,
Save that he rises to tower
Over above oceans of power,
Now to swoop as a plunging star,
Hurl his spots spectacular,
Now to poise, falcon-fashion,
Let the mad seas growl and dash on—
Am I to compass less than he
In my own sublimity
Of being, I who so see
Into other eternity
Than any deep of water makes,
Than earth models or sun bakes,
And I hurl my thought to higher
Than the suns' suns acrospire
To know there is that in me
Fathoms to sweep sublimity
Of other being than I take
From tea-sop, cob-apple cake?
There he purples in his sea,
Compasses all he claims to be—
Shall I compass less than he?

IV

I make my round of audits,
So I sum up the world;

One has his full of plaudits
Because he is church'd, is earled;
One picks his way by coarse
Brute upperdom, quadruped force;
Yet another weaves so fine
As soul is—but soul is divine
Beyond earth, stands not satisfied
Just because I lived and died,
Hangs to the outermost perch,
High height over earl or church,
So the world sums up so small
By my audit of it all.

A

There I lived because he died,
Pretty star-bird, Epsom dyed,
That gave me his heart and song inside,
While, by the good Graces that know,
My own heart would not have it so
I stay because he drops to go.
There then there goes in me
Loftier than the world I see,
Nobler being bound to be.

B

See how I am subject to Law
I must obey and labor for
As servant, whip into shape,
Take the foot-walk and short nape
Of all men under the sun
Since the tricks of men begun,
And I wear fetters—there 's this box
Of bones to hold me under locks
And I am knotted and so tied

By Moonrise

Soul stands prisoner inside—
Yet would I be free of Law,
Free of Power—I hunger for
Freedom to unshank, unmuzzle,
Cut the Gordian-knotted puzzle,
Come to independence, know
I am free to come or go
Above fetters, as I wis
Independent spirit is—
So am I meant to make free,
Bring all soul there is in me
To Power—shall I not do
As the Nature means me to
That gave me such eyeful hope
As sees outside my envelope
Of gull-feathers or quaint pot
Of broken amputated thought?

c

There I go to seek my mate!
Goes the tiger, too, the same!
Do I think the thing so great,
Mood which breedeth into flame
That dies down as I go on,
While lastly the flame is gone,
Yet I fill out into lordlier love
Than I find in mink or dove,
My love of truth, love of my race,
Love which knows nor resting-place
Nor fine friend nor finer mate,
And I am not to hesitate
For this, that I shall lose my place,
Life perchance, and in any case

What your world prizes for so great,
Gold, consummate laurels of State,
To prove in me there ranges higher
Than pot-life, ambition-fire,
Hence higher than all this earth
Of any trinketry is worth?

D

To strive for gain, is it not nature,
Rooted in each boiling creature?
But soul knows one loftier thing
Than gain, or any reckoning
What 's to come after—just to do
Noblemost there is in you
To the last stitch, nor once complain,
Nor count one stitch in the cloth of gain.

E

What is there that I would keep
Which the world has, once I come to sleep
And not question and not know
Which way I am bound to go,
But only that the truth is so
My tie of life I shall sever,
I shall give up thought and go—
What is there in earth below
Which a man would keep forever?

V

So I think, as night comes on,
As evening levels one pointing star
To show me how the world is gone,
How there goes other mightier Far

By Moonrise

For wonderment, and I look on
To other unnameable places
Of other being, soulfuller faces
And lastinger, profounded shine
A dot nearer what is divine
So I may see my one life
Of uncompromising strife
Brings me to power and to see
Genuine divinity in me
Beyond ounce-life—did I kill
Purple martin that I might fill
My veins from his cup of blood,
Drink him up, forget the good
He dropped me in his lifted mood
Of unpremeditated song
All soulful and all April long,
So is his death his dart
To pierce and open up my heart,
And I am commanded to see
Other nobler coils in me
To strike against this life I see,
Points my soulfuller destiny.

VI

So as I come to sleep,
As night begins to dark, look deep,
And I have gained on the thing,
Stand stronger for my buffeting,
Learn, whichever way I go,
Nobler being is yet to know,
Vast creation means it so,
Comes the last thought supreme,

I cannot think it otherwise:
Life is some blundersome dream
And I must wake, I must rise,
Such is the splendor of my skies.

HEAVEN

You thought no Heaven hangs in sight,
That you play only with bubbles of light
Which sun blows, life a way of endeavor
By what is only coinish, is clever,
Nor Heaven in aim, nothing ever
Beyond your being achievement-clever.

Or you thought Heaven is a place in space,
Poise of elegance, some quantum spot
Co-ordinate with place in thought,
Concretion to be put in phrase
I swallow so I get what light
Dangles in my chrysolite,
I get what thumb rings I wore,
Yellower only than before,
I get what banquets the senses—
Yet how may I accomplish that,
Knowing the where or the whence is
Only a trick of the senses
I play toes and trousers at
Till I unhitch my fastened mind,
Drop the haltered world behind?

Or you thought Heaven is a kind of Earth
As Earth is, as I know it
For its oddy-doddy worth,
Foot-gait and the clip to go it,

Nest of paramount easiness,
Or test of grit and greasiness
To strike the humdrum, the fetch,
Play you either rich or wretch,
Then the one little final stretch.

Comes life over again? Not that, depend!
More by universes goes divined
Than hobbles in any mind,
Worlds to circumference ends without end.
Did I find my task to do
Earns me buttonhole or shoe,
Yet I come to power by force
Of monster effort, by which one course
What man I am makes the point in view,
Never buttonhole or shoe.

Or you thought Heaven a thing to gain,
Payment in fair exchange
For fine performance, for magic pain—
Yet comes there quick the thought
There 's no Heaven to be bought
I value the dapple apple dot,
Once I hold this much in view,
Soul is never to be bought
To blossom transcendant true,
Never Heaven to be counted aught
As price to be paid to you
For loftiest performing true.

Mummy-chog in brackish stream
Fetches his twist to quiver
Till sun-spots in him gleam
As flashes the breast of a river,

And he is in his glorified state
Just to jump, to scintillate
In somersault, his oily curve,
So you see him pitch and swerve
To seaward, and the thing is done:
He is more than he begun,
Took his independent run,
Fattened in the plunging sun,
He his own Heaven—to match it, none.

I am more than chog in a stream,
As I thought—I leap to dream,
I splash in another light
Than sea-drip, ground-hog sight;
I rise to more than pelican thought,
I know what life is, what it is not,
I fulminate in a wider ether,
I 'm the cosmopolitan breather
Of worlds of unticketed size,
I sail outside this globe of eyes
Or any frame of Paradise
By no compass, by only my thought
Of what I am, of what I am not,
So must I tack to it to be
What I am not, the vast in me
Which matches with eternity,
As wherefore shall I not ripen
As I see the sea-parr stripen
And spotten out to his limit-rim,
All his Heaven complete in him?

If I may not, then am I less
Than he in his consummateness,
Since he is all creation meant him,

All the quality Heaven sent him,
While I am not that if I do not come
Into my own Elysium
Of marshaling such soul in me
As touches on immensity
Of incommensurable thought
Of what I am, of what I am not,
Which holds in view finer to come to
Than your rubadub will drum to,
More than chogset in his river
Could encompass in him ever.

Such thought!—so it comes to me
Out of tough perplexity
To enwiden, so I press at it,
Hurl my no and yes at it,
Try to poke and guess at it
To know if there monarchs a cause
Makes the thought what it is;
I face the thick army of Laws
At their tactics of mysteries
To find what the world will one day find,
Always this enwidening mind,
Wide as the view-pile I see
Of worlds to riddle eternity,
They but only part of me,
Seeing I encircle more
Than cobbles their eternal shore
Of cities—thereso I see
Eternity finds place in me,
As I find place in my mind
For the Heaven I may not see
Because it makes one part of me—
May I leave myself behind?

.
You are the exalted boy,
You in your wonderful prime
Which outnumbers and outwearies time,
You of the mountain-eagle-joy,
Such blue gentle ample eye
Like a smaller dome of sky,
Vision in the quality-brow
Of such a copious mould,
More is there than could be told,
More than the world knows how
To fathom—you plucked your power
Out of the oloroso flower,
Your mystic look out of the cloud
Of thundrous lip and the quick snap
Of lightning, out of the crowd
Of carbon atoms and the gorgon gap
Of darkness—you took your sigh,
Also your indescribable eye
Out of the rhythmic rhombic sky
Of planetudes—you took your gulp in
Sea-wash and sucked the pulp in,
You were brother to the sculpin,
So are you brother to the sun
And the moon's midnight—you ape
The grassant couple-flower, you shape
Spirit to the twist of nape
And visage, and overmore,
You are what is gone before,
So are you what is to come,
For, any way I may lean to think,
Past and Future are link and link
In endlessness, so you drum
Creation up to full your wants,

Capture such unvisioned haunts
Of Heaven as could not be said
In a lip's language—you the elf
To outrun what is life, is dead,
So are you your Heaven itself.

Will Heaven ever take you? Not so!
You shall take Heaven, for lo,
By the dominance of what is true
Out into the comprising blue,
By one reigning supreme ghost
Which is first of you and most,
There will your soul-open eyes
Take any Heaven by surprise,
For by my supra-mortal view
I see Heaven and Heaven in you.

Given all thought that could be given,
All dreaming 'round the zenith driven,
What Heaven for man like being Heaven?

INDEX

A

À Bras Ouverts, 1090
 Adelyn, or, How to Win Her, 545
 Afraid of Me ? 435
 After Death, 1040
 Agnes, 238
 Alioth, 745
 Always Rosalie, 479
 Among Ruins, 383
 Among the Moonbeams, 982
 Antipodes:

I. Hideous, 936

II. Beautiful, 940

Appian Way, The, 115

At a Window, 986

At Sea, 482

At the Altar, 993

Athanasia, 716

B

Bachelor, A, 290

Battle, 1219

Ben Total, 179

Bird in a Bonnet, A, 6

Bloodhounds of the Czar, 1019

Bountiful Canny's Granddaughter
 from Dull Moor, 417

Boy Song, 228

Bread on the Waters 1057

Brilla, 732

Brothers, 660

By Love, 737

By Moonrise, 1248

C

Campo Santo, 707

Cassandra Southwick, 944

Charlotte, 1087

Clasping the Roses, 832

Claudia, 849

Come, Come Away! 185

Confidentially, 542

Cor Cordium, 979

Craft, 473

D

De Amicitia, 1001

Dead, 394

Death, 1030

Deversorium Viatoris Hierosoly-
 mam Proficiscentis, 306

Doctor and Patient, 216

Dollar-Foot Farm, 840

Don Dun, 698

E

Eagle Song, 1047

Edward Farnum Southwick, 110

Egohood, 132

Elbows, 1136

Ella and Stella, 1101

Elmbank, 1186

Elsewhere, 1054

Endlessness, 439

Esto Perpetua, 406

Eunice, 522

Eunice and I, 797

Euthanasia, 761
 Ewigzeitgeist, 1203

F

Fearfulness, 1140
 For a Sign, 1175
 For Example, 390
 For Love, 1105
 Friend, A, 1146

G

Gage d' Amour, 1
 Gamblers, 1094
 General, The, 861
 Gloxinia, 45
 Golgotha, 93
 Greatness, 795
 Gunflint, 752

H

Halo Skimp, 315
 Heaven, 1256
 Heel of the Hunt, The, 876
 Hell, 346
 Her Duke, 308
 Hereafter, 492
 Here 's Luck! 143
 His Worst, 355

I

Imperialism, 768
 Impromptu, 301
 In a Bell-Tower, 526
 In a Dream, 447
 In a Mirror, 443
 In an Inn, 711
 In Coelis, 118
 In Preston, 503
 In the Nature of Things, 67
 In the Overworld, 294
 Incognito, 846

Indictment, The, 1210

J

Japanese War Claim, A, 297
 Jealous, 990
 Jockey-Day, 241

K

Kings and Queens, 1005
 Know Thy Chick, 777
 Know Thy Horse, 669
 Know Thy Mate, 1015
 Know Thy Phyllis, 403
 Know Thy Task, 262
 Know Thyself, 83

L

Leo and Elfinella, 674
 Life in the World, 512
 Lilac, 11
 Little Silver, 337
 Longings of an Acolyte, 1153
 Lord Lavish, 158
 Lost and Found, 805
 Love, 335
 Lover to Priest, 124

M

Mabel Mapleton, 430
 Man and Bird, 63
 Man and Book, 371
 Man Militant, The, 265
 Man of It, The, 244
 Man or Spider ? 663
 Midfield Thoughts, 748
 Monk in Monotone, A, 958
 Moon Fields, or Man the God, 556
 More and Higher, 1072
 My Friends, 364
 My Rose, 1171
 My Wren, 1098

My Xenium, 191

N

Night of the Big Wind, The, 1167

No Death, 467

No Man's Friend, 49

Nonconformist, 203

Not a Word, 1077

Not All Is Gold, 1245

Not So Quick, 1035

Not Yet, 1118

Not Your Dog, 658

Now and Then, 90

O

Old Darby, 320

On the Rhine, 196

One Afternoon, 231

One Great Man, 488

One Man, 19

One Nobleman, 917

Ootrum and Corncockle, 258

P

Paper Dolls, 452

Peacham Pasture, 1196

Pearl, 78

Pebbles, 211

Peter Roublemint, 85

Philosopher and Priest, 1009

Pickthank and Prudence, 1111

Pink Apple Point, 456

Pluck-Luck, 719

Polly Man and Folly Girl, 702

Priest and Sequela, 786

Priestliness, 1239

Prunella's Priest, 881

Pyrtha, 30

Q

Quechee River, 153

Question, The, 950

R

Raison d' Être, 866

Rivals, 783

Robber, A, 410

Rosalie, 955

Rosy Weigelia, 507

'Round a Corner, 924

Run-Arnuck Mack, 920

S

Savigny and Seltzerella, 1234

Semper Supra, 836

Shark and the Lark, The, 961

Sheldrake Elegance, 350

Shriving Pen, A, 1049

Sing, Gentle Bird, 146

Sky Word, A, 817

Song, 122

Song in a Thistle, A, 870

Spirit, 807

Spirit Beauty, 827

Stars, The, 1182

Story of Zemepheth Tallith, The,
485

"Success" at a Brush, 150

Sufficit, 54

Summer Days, 42

Sunrise Reverie, 1122

Supernity, 126

Sword and Pen, 997

Sylph Self, The, 1091

T

Thinking of Eunice, 686

Thinking of Preston, 756

Thou Shalt Not Kill, 801

To a Street Minstrel, 694
To My Forefathers, 1230
To Such a Wife, 15
To Whom It May Concern, 1222
Tragedy, 1082
Trickly Le Bon Pot, 28
Twins, 342
Two Kinds of Love, 928
Two Notes of a Thrush, 1227

U

Under Snow, 1109

V

Valerie Fay, 465
Viewfully, 248
Village Fool, 163
Virtute, Non Astutia, 1129

W

Waiting, 812
Wily Smiley, 376
Worship *versus* Love, 822
Wytopitlock, 13

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